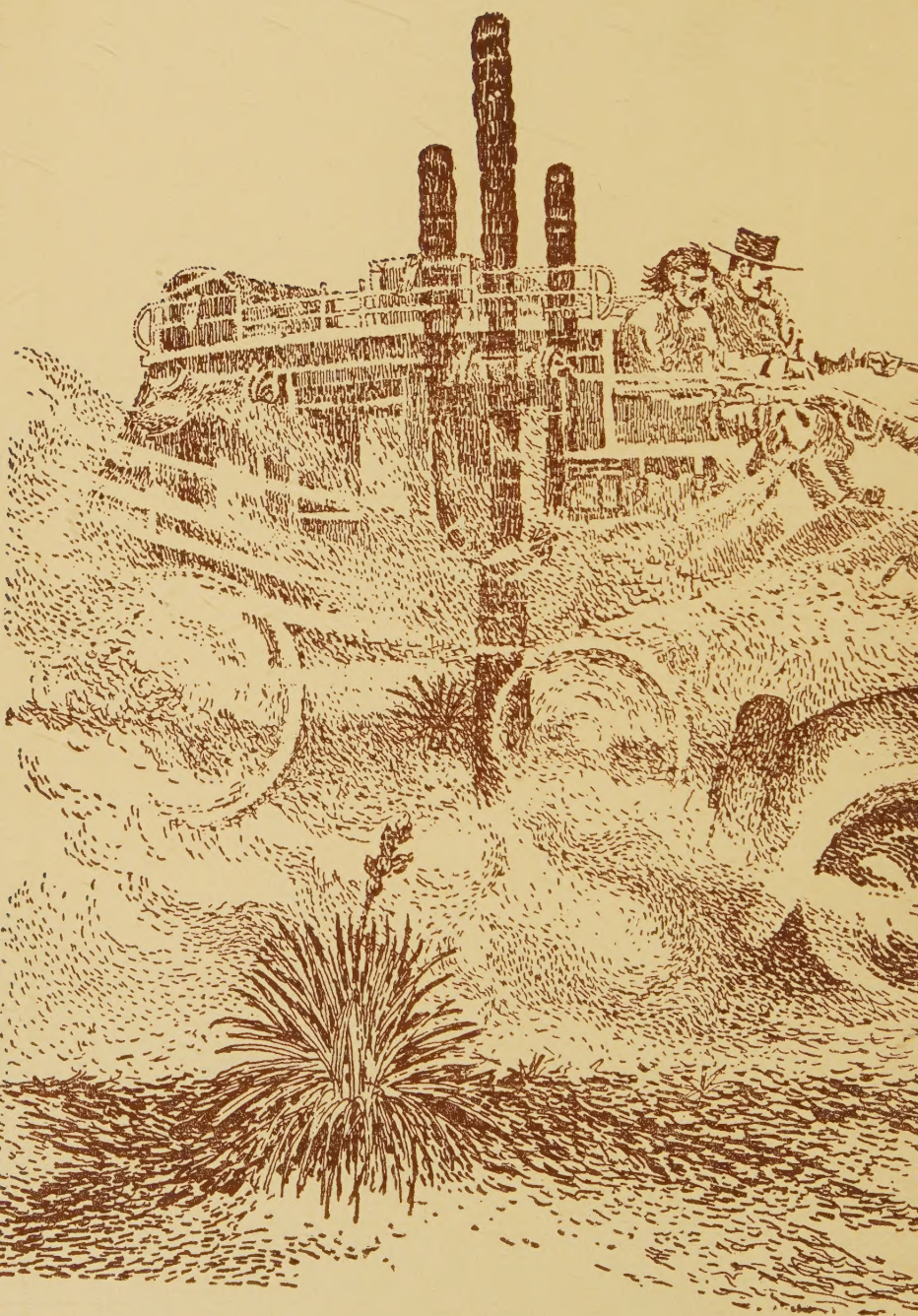


ROADS^{to} ROAM

HOFFMAN BIRNEY



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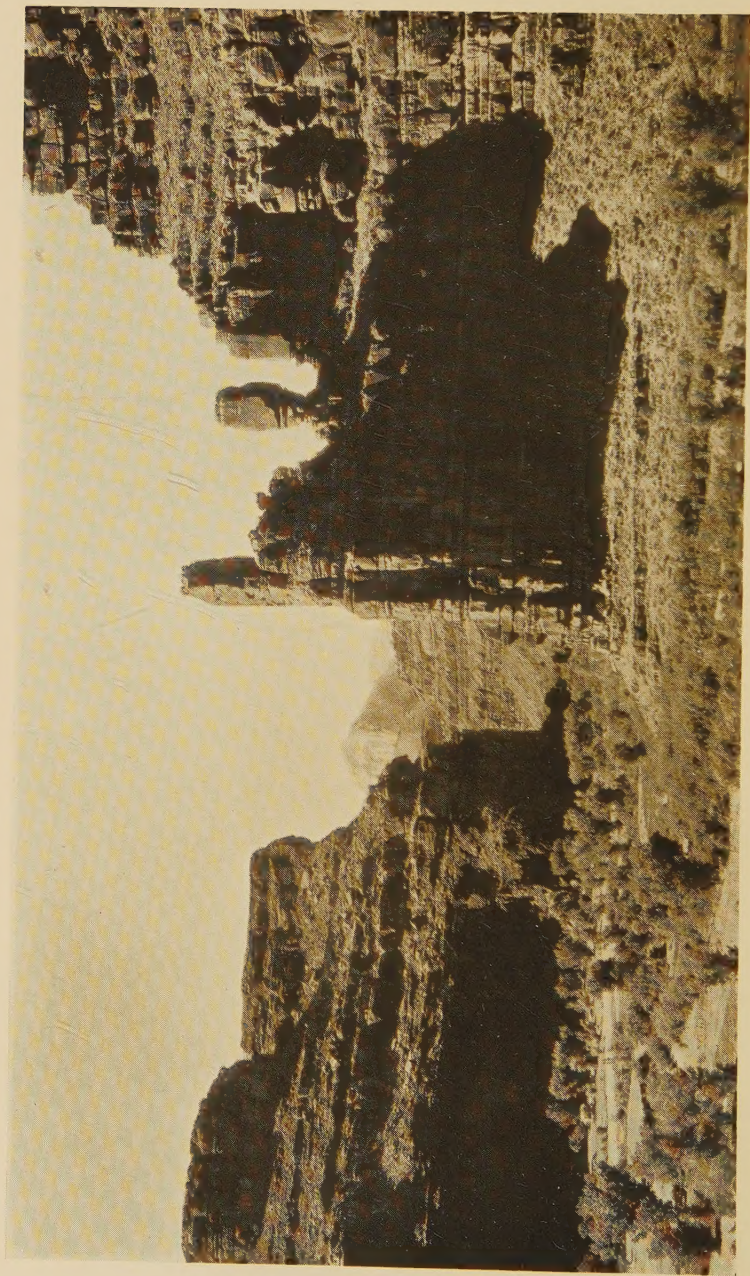
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ROADS TO ROAM

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KING OF THE MESA
THE MASKED RIDER
STEELDUST; THE STORY OF
A HORSE
THE CAÑON OF LOST WATERS
VIGILANTES



HAVASU CAÑON. THE TWO LOVERS AND THE LITTLE GOD

85
ROADS^{to} ROAM
by
HOFFMAN BIRNEY

DRAWINGS BY
Charles Hargens



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Roads to Roam

MADE IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Dedicated

with a very genuine affection, to "Betsy," a roadster who has been my companion on some 40,000 miles of wandering over highway, by-path, dim trail, and no roads at all. Her fat and expensive tires have kicked up the dust in twenty-two of the states of the Union and three of Old Mexico. She has made four trips from coast to coast and has crossed the Continental Divide a score of times. Not once has she failed me by reason of mechanical breakdown. Faithful, loyal, sturdy, dependable, uncomplaining — would that every human I have encountered had possessed similar virtues!

Foreword

"Roads to Roam" was written with no thought of publication in mind. It was originally prepared by Mr. Birney simply as a running narrative to accompany several hundred photographs he had taken in the course of his trip. Under the title of "Visible Forms," it was circulated among a dozen of his friends, and it was in this very intimacy that the chief charm of the book lay for those whom it reached. It is the friendly, intimate journal of one who knows and loves the country of which he writes and who wishes to share it with others. As such, it is offered with but little revision and no apologies.

THE EDITOR



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Roads to Roam

CHAPTER I

BY WAY OF GETTING STARTED



CHAPTER I

By Way of Getting Started

FROM time to time books come to my desk — books of travel by land, sea, and air; opening up fresh vistas and awakening old dreams. I've roamed with Amundsen — gentleman unafraid — around both the Poles, trekked veldt and jungle with Stewart Edward White and Beebe, pursued white shadows and sailed the Kawa and the Snark through tropic seas where the monsoon sings through the swaying palms and the league-long breakers crash on the outer reef, and I've zig-zagged back and forth across America with Winifred Hawkrige Dixon — whom I bet would make the bulliest roving companion of them all!

They're great books! I revel in them. They tell of adventures, glorious and otherwise; of dangers narrowly averted, of difficulties bravely met. Even those volumes

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that deal with this land of ours carry a hint that the writers were questing forth into the blue, that perils lurked on every hand, and that “’twas only by favor of God they rode so long alive.” I repeat, I like those books. I’d like even better to be able to write one of them for myself — to write it and see it sell well into the thousands and the tens of thousands. But fiction is fiction and fact is fact — and I’ll find those adventures, those perils of lonely trails, only vicariously.

This can be little more than a journal — a prosaic, thrill-less, day by day account of some seven thousand and more miles of wandering in the course of one summer west of the Rockies.

Adventure, romance, danger — all passed me by. This will be the unexciting Odyssey of one who has a natural tendency to shun danger, who looks with a rather bilious and cynical eye upon Romance, and who has a healthy respect — only vanity prevented the writing of the word “fear” — for such things as bears, snakes, scorpions, tarantulas, bandits, and all other and similar disturbers of the peace of mind.

All the books I’ve read devote at least a chapter to an explanation of the preparations for the trip and a detailed list, for the guidance of others, of the equipment carried. Here, too, I am disappointingly heterodox. During the

By Way of Getting Started

summer months of 1928 I drove 7,250 miles through seven Western states. I made no more preparation for the trip than I would to drive down town, and had no mechanical trouble whatever beyond a broken spring.

The only bulky piece of equipment I carried was my bedroll — one double and one single blanket and a light mattress wrapped in a canvas "tarp." My camera, in its case, hung from a hook beneath the cowl on the right-hand side of the car. I had a .45 caliber revolver where I could reach it, but it was used only once — to take a snap shot at a coyote that loped across a desert road. Incidentally, however, I'd never take a trip without one. It may be a personal idiosyncrasy of mine, but I feel the presence of a husky piece of hand artillery conducive to a certain peace of mind when making long, lonely drives. One might carry it for a hundred thousand miles and never need it, but when it is needed there is no substitute for it. There are times when the soft answer and the other cheek fail to work out according to the formula laid down in Holy Writ.

In Salt Lake City I acquired a long-handled shovel that was carried lashed across the rear bumpers. A shovel — not a child's toy scoop, but a man's-sized implement — is a mighty handy thing to have along on the back roads where sand is deep and abundant and you might wait

Roads to Roam

three days for a friendly fellow-motorist to come along and offer to tow you out.

I'm a fair-to-middlin' cook, but I infinitely prefer a restaurant meal (even a poor one) to one that I have prepared myself, so carried no grub nor facilities for cooking beyond a pint thermos bottle that I had filled with coffee each night so as to kill the wire edge of hunger in the morning. I carried no tent and when on the road slept out, under the stars, wherever 10:00 P.M. found me. Disappointing though it may prove, I was not once disturbed by bandits, only once annoyed by rain, nor ever set to scrambling and slapping by the invasion of scorpion, tarantula, or centipede. In the entire 7,250 miles I saw, if memory serves correctly, only three serpents, all of them harmless.

It's a horrible admission, that; but truth is mighty and must prevail and all that sort of thing, and the one lesson taught by the journey, the only moral that adorns this tale, is that such expeditions are exceedingly simple and can be duplicated by anyone.

The starting point was Tucson, Arizona. Loud shrieks of protest from the East. That's a trip in itself, you shout! Perhaps, perhaps, but a very easy one. About twenty-seven hundred miles from New York, good roads virtually all the way — not a hundred and fifty miles of

By Way of Getting Started

really poor highway — a trip that can be made in one week without undue strain on car, driver, or passengers. (Write for routing.)

Anyhow, the start was made from Tucson because Tucson — or, rather, forty acres of cactus and greasewood in the desert some dozen miles from the Old Pueblo — happens to be Home.

There are places to go and things to do in and around Tucson. For nine months of the year it boasts a climate that cannot be excelled by any city in America, and it is quite the most "livable" town in Arizona. We who call the Old Pueblo home have learned to love the place. We do not even resent the wisecrack that would tell the world that the Arizona legislature some years ago faced the problem of where to place the University and the State Insane Asylum. Phoenix, the capital, and Tucson were rivals. Tucson lost, they say, and got the University.

The University was established during the 'nineties. It's a very young school, although it does not like to be reminded of the fact and is struggling to acquire traditions and sophistication. Our desert atmosphere is not favorable to ivied walls or the elms of dear old Yale, and it's hard to work up much pep about class contests or football games when the thermometer dictates white linen suits and summer dresses. The campus is a pleasant oasis of

Roads to Roam

green, kept that way by constant irrigation; the outdoor swimming pool is shaded by towering pepper trees, and there's a splendid exhibit of the pottery and utensils of the prehistoric peoples of the Southwest — most of it due to the instinct for ruins and the digging ability possessed by Dean Byron Cummings of the Department of Archaeology. The University has a collection of Amerindian baskets, Apache, Papago, Pima, and California, that is second to none in the country. All their ethnological and archaeological stuff, it may be remarked, is very inadequately housed in a couple of rooms on the top floor of the "Aggie" building. They need a museum, but when and whether a grudging legislature will give it to them is another matter.

There is one thing in Tucson, however, of which we are inordinately proud. Nine miles south of the town is our principal boast, the old Franciscan mission of San Xavier del Bac. And, by the way, while you're down here don't pronounce the name as though it were spelled Xavier. People will wonder what you're talking about. This is Spanish-America and until the Gadsden Purchase was a part of Mexico. In Tucson, Xavier is given the Hispanic pronunciation of "Ha-veer" — two syllables, with the accent on the final.

One wonders why San Xavier is not better known. San



“ THE MOST BEAUTIFUL ECCLESIASTICAL BUILDING
IN AMERICA ”

By Way of Getting Started

Juan Capistrano, Santa Barbara, San José, and the other California missions stare at one from the advertising and reading pages of virtually every magazine in the land, yet beside the chaste white beauty of San Xavier they are little more than ugly piles of 'dobe.

Every schoolboy has heard of the Old North Church where the "one if by land and two if by sea" act was pulled, yet the history of San Xavier, Tumacacori, and Guevavi Missions, and the exploits of Padre Kino, Garces, and Escalante form a tale far more thrilling than any deed of the galloping silversmith, Paul Revere, or any of the minute-men.

The present mission is a few miles south of the original that Padre Kino — the Hispanized form of Kühne, a Bohemian Jesuit — founded in 1692 near the Papago village of Bac or Vac. It was built by brothers, secular architects, employed by the Franciscans, and you will learn that the unfinished condition of the eastern tower is a memorial as eternal as the building to one of the brothers who was killed in a fall from the flat top whereon the dome had not yet been raised.

There's not a beamed or trussed arch used anywhere in the construction of San Xavier. The brothers solved such technical difficulties by building the domes of 'dobe bricks over huge mounds of sand. When the 'dobe had dried and

Roads to Roam

set they shovelled away the sand and there was the dome. Strikes, sabotage, and other labor crises were not among their problems.

Winifred Dixon has called San Xavier the Rheims of the Papago. It is a good descriptive title. The Papagos — there are about six thousand of them in southern Arizona — wear a veneer of Roman Catholicism over their own primitive beliefs. Their little mud huts, windowless and unsanitary, cluster around the white walls of the mission, and from as far away as Quitovaquito and the *terra incognita* of the Pinacate desert and the delta of the Colorado they come to San Xavier to burn candles in the shrine of the Virgin and to place little votive offerings of gold and silver and flowers before the images of the overdressed saints.

They say their prayers like good Catholics and then hurry home to the pagan festivals incident to the gathering of the fruit of the saguaro — the giant cactus — and the brewing of a heady wine therefrom. All of which is probably perfectly satisfactory to Father Tiburcio Wand, who in his kindly, humorous, tolerant wisdom knows so well his primitive flock.

The old church was occupied at various times by impious soldiers of two nations who amused themselves by shooting at the murals of saints and martyrs and by chip-

By Way of Getting Started

ping off the goldleaf that decorated the domes. Despite this vandalism, the paintings are remarkably well-preserved. How those old artists did appeal to the Indians' love of color! The high altar is a blaze of gold and crimson and blue, as brilliant today as when wet from the brush. The early padres made those altar decorations and the elaborate murals of the transept a primer in religion for their primitive charges. One sees saints wearing high-crowned sombreros, and Arizona desert growths, yucca and saguaro, as backgrounds for scenes from the life of Christ. Some angels are conventionally blonde; others are of a hue decidedly Papagonian in its duskiness.

But the paintings are incidental. Father Wand and his associates are there to explain them to you and to point out the image of a martyred saint with a dagger driven into his breast, and the conventionalized knotted cord of the Franciscan brotherhood running entirely around the building. Most impressive, most unforgettable, about San Xavier is its overpowering beauty; the perfection of its balance and proportion. It is one of the few buildings I have ever seen that is charming from any angle of approach, and I consider it the most beautiful ecclesiastical structure in America.

The only thing that spoils it in any way is the name that some Tucson booster thought up as a handle to tack on

Roads to Roam

to it. "The White Dove of the Desert!" There's something almost nauseating to me in that title. I don't know where they got it, but I'll give pretty good odds that neither the padres nor the Papagos are responsible for it.

San Xavier is white, but there's nothing of the dove, no cooing shyness, about its beauty. Its loveliness is that of a queenly, gracious woman; a queen so gently reared, so conscious of her own high station and dignity, that she can afford to be democratic, to associate with the lowly and thereby lose no caste. San Xavier is San Xavier; it needs no qualifying title.

After this short clerical detour let us get started. Make sure "Betsy" has gas and oil — take care of her appetite for those two essentials and she'll take you anywhere that there's traction for her rear wheels — turn on the switch, step on the starter, and we're off!

Casa Grande, the town, is sixty-seven miles north of Tucson and the prehistoric ruin — the "Great House" that gives the modern settlement its name — is fifteen or eighteen miles more. All good road, skirting the black foothills of the Tucson Mountains and then plunging across the desert through the fringe of a magnificent forest of saguaro — the giant cactus of Arizona. The needle-sharp crest of Picacho Peak — as redundant a title as Rio Grande River — is the most prominent landmark. When



OLD PAPAGOS



PAPAGO ISOLATION HUT

By Way of Getting Started

the ill-fated dirigible Shenandoah made her voyage from Lakehurst to the Pacific coast and return, she very nearly hung up her duralumin bones on this jagged pinnacle. The ship had been lost over Bisbee, but an amateur wireless operator there had oriented the pilots and they were flying low, following the Southern Pacific tracks. Dawn was just touching with gray the summits of the Tortillita Mountains when the lookout suddenly saw a gaunt rocky finger — unmarked on the navigator's maps — clutching for the control car. A shout of warning, the elevating rudders raised to their utmost extent, a five-hundred gallon tank of gasoline dropped to lighten the ship, and the Shenandoah, the Daughter of the Stars, in a swerving, climbing turn, barely cleared Picacho's angry talon. The twisted, crashed drum still lies, so far as I know, on the steep rocky slopes.

The ruins of Casa Grande are of great interest to the archaeologist but hold no particular appeal for the casual sightseer who knows little and cares less about the pre-historic cultures of the American Southwest.

They are slapped down in the middle of a treeless, sterile desert — hotter than the seven brass hinges of Hades — and have nothing of the picturesqueness of the cliff- and cave-dwellings. Such charm as they might have possessed, the dignity of their antiquity, is taken from

Roads to Roam

them by the atrocity of their restoration. Congress, as Congress is prone to do, probably appropriated about half as much as was necessary to do the job in proper style, and the principal building — a great four-storeyed pile with three-foot walls of *caliche* mud laid in courses — has been covered with a tin roof that is jerked down over the ruined walls and fitted as closely as a jockey's cap. Other remains of walls have been capped with concrete — an excellent preservative, no doubt, but one that plays hob with art. The restorers have christened the outlying structures "clan houses." Why, Allah alone knows.

Casa Grande was first seen and described — and named — by Padre Eusebio Francisco Kino, that valiant, pioneering Jesuit to whom I gave a little publicity in connection with San Xavier. He was there first in 1694 and celebrated mass within the walls. It is the best preserved and most striking example of what is known as the Lower — some now call it the Middle — Gila culture, a phase of southwestern prehistoric civilization characterized by the erection of communal dwellings about an open compound.

The museum is interesting. Some splendid work has been done in repairing broken pottery excavated in the vicinity and there is an excellent collection of the stone implements used by the ancient builders. The excavations at Casa Grande brought to light one of the most

By Way of Getting Started

remarkable relics ever discovered in the Southwest, a "thunder-bird" of turquoise set in pinkish shell. There are some 900 tiny rectangles of the precious and beautiful blue stone used in the mosaic. Each one is precisely bevelled and set in a matrix of piñon gum. A beautiful example of ancient craftsmanship!

They had a clock, too, these old "Hohokam." There's a hole about an inch and a half in diameter in the eastern face of one of the lower rooms of Casa Grande. A similar hole, exactly aligned with the first, is pierced through the opposite wall of the room. On just two days of the year — on October 6th and on April 6th — the first rays of the rising sun shine through both of those orifices and throw a disc of yellow light on the opposite wall of the inner chamber! An accurate and absolutely infallible six-month's timepiece.

Also, there's a maze of intricate spiral design pecked in the plaster on the wall of another room. An exactly similar maze, you will be told, was found several years ago on a bronze coin excavated in the ruins of ancient Crete! More food for thought and an infinity of speculation — even though I never have been able to learn when that coin was found or in what museum it now reposes. It's a good story, though.

Dean Cummings, incidentally, expresses the opinion

Roads to Roam

that the maze is of Piman origin and was not pecked on the wall until many years after the builders of Casa Grande has disappeared.

I got one good laugh at Casa Grande. A tourist — I wonder why I always can get a giggle out of tourists? I'm one myself, even though I'll never admit it. I've toured about a hundred thousand miles in the last three years — well, a tourist took a great interest in my photographic activities and followed me all around the place. He could not understand why I did not want him posed gracefully in an ancient doorway, and still less could he comprehend my lack of interest in the great horned owls that had built their nests high under the tin roof that protects the "Great House."

"You can see them," he told me solemnly. "I'll bet you could climb up on those walls and get a picture of them easy. They just sit there and looked down at me."

I wanted to tell him that wouldn't be difficult — even for an owl. He simply couldn't understand why I should photograph mud walls when living, breathing owls awaited my camera. I guess I broke his heart. I left Casa Grande owl-less.

Florence, the county-seat of Pinal County, is a good place to get lunch if you're not too particular, and from there you can jog over a rather rutty road to Superior



CASA GRANDE



CACTUS AND CLOUD SHADOWS

By Way of Getting Started

Junction. The only thing to see in Florence is the Arizona State Penitentiary, and as the blackest of the Two Crows remarked, "who cares 'bout dat?"

The drive from Florence through Superior and Miami to Globe is far shorter than the Apache Trail a dozen miles to the north and almost equally enthralling. There's a magnificent highway from the dirty, squalid, little mining town of Superior up the Queen Creek Cañon. In many places the road is built on ledges overhanging the deep gorge and at one point the engineers were forced to tunnel a great rocky headland. It's a high-gear road all the way and the curves, though thrilling, are not dangerous. The summit has an altitude of 5,100 feet and from there the road swings down in sweeping curves through hills covered with the dark green of blackjack and white oak to the twin towns of Miami and Globe.

Is there anywhere in the world such a thing as beauty in a mining town? Seemingly when man starts tearing her store of mineral from the earth it reacts on his own soul and plays havoc with his aesthetic instincts. Globe and Miami are no worse, and no better, than any other copper towns. Splendid places to pass through — quickly.

The Apache Trail turns off just west of Globe and after a dozen or so hot and dusty miles climbs a long grade about the foot of Signal Mountain and gives one a glimpse

Roads to Roam

of the blue waters of Roosevelt Lake, impounded by the great Roosevelt Dam on the Salt River. To the south are the Pinal Mountains, to the north the Apache Mountains and the Sierra Ancha, their more distant summits heavily forested with splendid pines; and between the ranges is a great expanse of water—cool and attractively blue against the reddish-brown rocks of the encircling hills. There's a bridge across the Salt at the extreme head of the lake and from there a road leads up to Carr's Ranch, a delightfully cool resort in the pines, and on to Young and Heber and Pleasant Valley, remote and almost inaccessible little towns of the Tonto Basin.

This Apache Trail on which we are now is another section that I think has never been properly presented to the traveling public, although virtually every magazine carries advertisements, paid for by the Southern Pacific Railroad, crying its marvels to the ears of all. The Apache Trail—the highway from Globe to Phoenix by way of Roosevelt Dam—is to the Southern Pacific what the Indian Detour and Grand Cañon are to the Santa Fé. There is this difference, the presentation of which may result in a long-winded commentary. The Indian Detour is interesting mainly as a turning-back of the pages of history. One sees villages that were inhabited long before the Spaniard ever appeared in this land in search of the

By Way of Getting Started

mythical seven cities of Cibola, and stands in mission churches that were built by Indian labor under the direction of the padres and that echoed to the footsteps of Oñate and Tovar and Albuquerque themselves.

But the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico are woefully over-civilized and commercialized. The Harveycars have introduced them to the great and gullible American tourist, and it is the tourist who pays and pays and pays. The arrival of a Harveycar is anticipated with the confidence that one awaits the 8:15 from Chestnut Hill, and its appearance in any of the villages is a signal for the display of best bib and tucker and great racks of jars, ollas, pitchers, ash-trays, and what have you in the line of the degenerate pottery that is now manufactured solely for sale. Tesuque trots out her crude, pot-bellied rain-gods, each with his individual thunder-mug between his knees, and Santa Clara produces her lovely burnished black ware — beautiful and brittle.

Should the white visitors produce cameras — and what white visitor does not — they are reminded of the Indian's antipathy to those devices and his deep-seated belief that something of his own soul enters into each artificial likeness. Such is his fundamental religious conviction, but American money makes him an heterodox agnostic that delights in posing before clicking shutters. The cost of

Roads to Roam

making the noble red man see the light of progress varies. If business is slack and Harveycars infrequent, the casual visitor can manufacture a multitude of backsliders for two bits a head. I have known a handful of cigarettes, ceremoniously presented to the *presidente*, to accomplish the trick. Only at lonely Ácoma, the sky city, has a definite, inflexible standard been established. The set price there is five bucks — and don't try to jew down the surly Ácomans. It doesn't work. They yield to neither defiance nor blandishments. Ácoma is an independent republic within the confines of these here now United States, and no law supersedes the verbal mandates of its *presidente*. *Cinco pesos*, or hit the trail to the foot of the mesa and hit it right now!

Also — and now this Indian Detour is taking us back to the Apache Trail — between Pecos and San Domingo, Púye and Taos, are many long, dusty, uninteresting miles. The trip around the Apache loop, from Phoenix to Globe and back to the Phoenix highway by Miami and Superior, takes all day, and nowhere in America, I firmly believe, is there a trip that is scenically more spectacular and worth while and with fewer uninteresting vistas.

The Apache Trail is beautiful in no matter which direction it is driven, but if one is to drive it only once it is probably a little more preferable to take it from west to



PAPAGO-SAGUARO NATIONAL MONUMENT



" . . . IT WON'T FALL "

By Way of Getting Started

east; to go in from Phoenix to Globe and out by way of Superior. From the state capital, the road leads through the fertile Salt River Valley, a testimonial in fragrant alfalfa and glossy citrus trees to the vision that placed the great Roosevelt Dam and the less famous barriers at Horse Mesa and Cañon Lake across the Salt. Between Phoenix and Tempé, the highway skirts the Papago-Saguaro National Monument, an area set aside by the government for the preservation of the natural growths of the desert.

The particular location was probably determined by the presence there of several enormous boulders, possibly a couple of hundred feet long and seventy-five feet in height, worn by erosion into weird, pitted shapes. Here and there great holes have been worn entirely through the masses of rock. They are a most fitting background for the desert plants, the greasewood with its burnished leaves, the gray-green, spiny cholla, and the tall, gaunt, austere saguaro.

On through Tempé and Mesa, prosperous little farming towns that are virtually suburbs of Phoenix. The last is a Mormon village and to the south of the highway, surrounded by green fields, the Latter Day Saints have erected a white marble temple, beautiful in its chaste, severe simplicity.

The irrigated areas are left behind soon after passing

Roads to Roam

through Mesa. The desert, sandy and drab with dusty mesquite brush, lies on either side of the road that leads as straight as an arrow toward a great, bluff-sided, domed mass of red-brown rock. This is Superstition Mountain, guardian of the western portal of the Apache Trail.

Somewhere I have read, or been told, the legend that is associated with the peak, but its details escape me. Either a bunch of Apaches ambushed some Pimas in a gloomy cañon of the mountain and massacred the entire outfit; or else the Pimas played the same boyish prank on a visiting delegation of Apaches. Whichever way it was, both tribes regard Superstition Mountain with lively terror, believing it to be a regular Dracula's castle of un-dead spirits.

The highway gives it a fairly wide berth, however, and I've never heard of any tourists being annoyed by the very good Indians that might lie unburied in its dark defiles. We pass to the north of the mountain, climb a long, gradual grade and then, almost before we know it, are on the Apache Trail that the advertisements strive so ineffectively to describe.

Gone entirely are the wide vistas across the flat desert terrain. The road — a splendid graded highway — twists and loops and corkscrews back and forth over hogback and long ridge. Here is a thousand-foot descent of sheer

By Way of Getting Started

bronze-hued wall, there a long, rounded, rock-strewn ridge fairly bristling with tall saguaro; and here, there, and everywhere a welter of peaks and pinnacles and spires in blacks and browns and tans and ochers and somber reds.

Gorgeous — splendid — beautiful — awful — majestic . . . and one's stock of adjectives is exhausted long before one is fairly embarked on the trail. Succeeding vistas are welcomed with a silence that is no less appreciative and infinitely more suitable.

We skirt Cañon Lake and Apache Lake, wide expanses of surprisingly clear water impounded by great dams made necessary by the ever-increasing demands of the agricultural interests of the Salt River Valley. Cañon Lake is quite a favorite playground for Phoenixians. One can take a motorboat there and travel for miles up deep, cool, dark cañons. I've never done it but I'm sure going to some day. Twenty-mile boat-rides are rare events in this country.

About fifteen miles — it may be more — beyond Superstition Mountain the road leads out to a naked point above a mighty gulf and then turns sharply to the right down the famous Fish Creek Hill. Everywhere you travel along the beaten trails of Arizona you will hear men speak, in reverent whispers, of that descent. To the tourist who embarks on the Apache Trail simply as the most direct

Roads to Roam

route from Phoenix to Globe, Fish Creek undoubtedly has certain terrifying aspects. A descent of a couple of thousand feet is not to be sneered at, particularly when you can *look* the entire distance and see your road far, far below, a thread-like line of white winding in and out of green cottonwoods on the brown floor of the cañon.

If you feel yourself getting yellow, however, it is well to look at the license-plates on the cars driven by those who speak of the dangers of Fish Creek Hill. Chances are that you'll read Kansas, Oklahoma, Indiana, and the names of other states where anything less level than a billiard table is regarded as a mountain.

Fish Creek is a long, steep hill, don't kid yourself about that; but it's almost trivial compared to others we're going to descend on this trip—the Red Mountain Highway, the “Knife Edge Road” up Mesa Verde, and Snebley Hill.

A car is under perfect control in second gear on Fish Creek Hill, and while the driver may be able to get only stolen glances at the scenery there's no law against his stopping and enjoying to the utmost the savage grandeur displayed so lavishly. From the bridge at the foot of the hill one can look into the continuation of Fish Creek Cañon, a narrow, gloomy crevasse shut in by towering

By Way of Getting Started

black cliffs. Doré would have revelled in its artistic possibilities — as he would over virtually every inch of the Apache Trail.

Roosevelt Dam is the only one of the Salt River irrigation projects that is visible from the highway. It is a masonry structure, and most impressive when approached from the West. Here we turn from the Apache Trail and take a road that leads directly over the dam, rounds the point whereon the S. P. have built an hotel, and climbs steadily northward following, for some miles, the course of Tonto Creek. Slowly the country alters. The giant cactus disappears, the scattered blackjacks give way to cedars and to fragrant juniper, and these are succeeded by pines. Up the Tonto Hill — a good stiff pull with a glorious vista of the blue-green Mazatlal Mountains to reward you at the top — then a drop over the edge of the Tonto Rim and a drive between fields of fragrant alfalfa into the little town of Payson.

It's a good place to spend the night, or even a longer period, is Payson. The nearest railroad is at Globe, eighty miles away, and it's cool, comfortable, and pleasantly off the tourist track. There's a good hotel there — it was built by a motion-picture outfit that came in here to film Zane Grey's "To the Last Man" — and the pro-

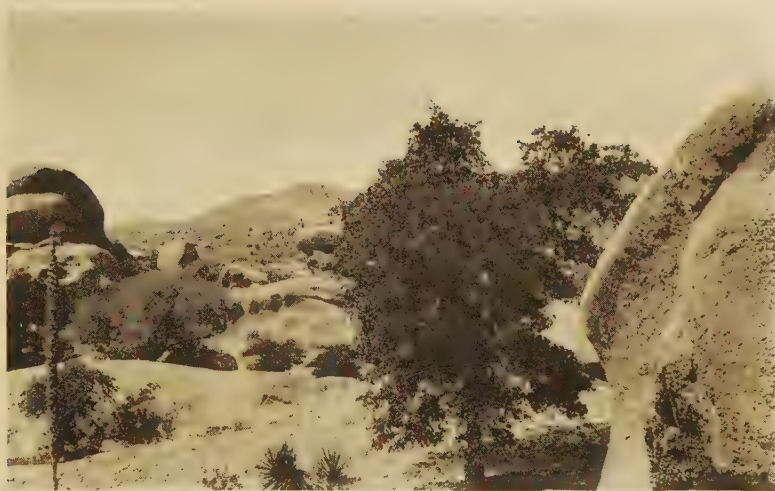
Roads to Roam

prietress seems genuinely glad to see you and expresses regret that she can offer little beside fresh eggs and home-cured ham.

Payson is a quaint little town. The big pines grow in the very streets and the houses are of pine logs chinked with white plaster. There are few young men. Payson is too quiet, too remote, for them. They are working in the stores of Globe and Miami and in the mines at those towns and at Clarkdale and Jerome. The elders play cards for ten cents a corner in a shabby billiard-hall that was once a saloon and cuss the government for ruining the cattle business by the establishment of forest reserves and the imposition of grazing restrictions. One old fellow is full of bragging reminiscences of his feats with a divining rod in locating water and determining, within six inches, its depth beneath the surface of the ground.

And right here I want to interpolate something of my own curiosity about this divining-rod racket. Why should a Y-shaped wand of witch-hazel or peach wood dip strongly to denote the presence of water or of precious metals? Superstition, says you? Yes, maybe, but the fact remains that the darn things do dip!

Some months after talking with those ancients in Payson I was to be in Helena, Montana. In Grizzly Gulch, not far from that town, I ran across one of the real old-



ALONG THE APACHE TRAIL



ROOSEVELT DAM

By Way of Getting Started

time prospectors. The location is one that fifty years ago was rich in placer gold, but the bars have all been cleaned out and what gold is there now is in deep ore bodies, low in mineral content, far beneath the surface. I walked the hills with this old duffer and listened to his tales of prospecting in Canada and along the backbone of the Rockies from Montana to Mexico. He had a divining-rod of witch-hazel and he initiated me into its use.

Holding the ends of the Y in either hand, with my arms fully extended, I walked across the rocky slope. My tutor was close behind me, holding in his hand an ordinary pocket compass which, he said, enabled him to identify the nature of the mineral located by the rod. He had all the minerals spotted. Gold, silver, lead, iron, manganese, copper, zinc — each had its proper place, so and so many degrees off the north-south line. The skeptical observer could not avoid noticing that such little details as variation and deviation apparently did not enter into his calculations, but what did impress the said s. o. was that the rod dipped.

It writhed in my hands like a living thing, forcing my arms down from their horizontal position. Even after I had relinquished the wand, my wrists felt the strain of unconsciously resisting the force that drew it down toward the earth!

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I have spoken of the phenomenon to several extremely hard-boiled, practical, mining engineers of my acquaintance. All of them admit that they have encountered divining-rods and seen them dip, but none will make any effort to tell why. Which apparently closes the incident and brings us back, in a long jump, to Payson.

There's no movie in the town, no excitement — nothing to do but go to bed and I was perfectly willing to do that after more than two hundred miles of mountain driving. The selvage of the curtains in my room bore the information that the material was “super-lizardine,” and my last waking recollection was a vague desire to see the super-lizard that produced it. A sublimated chuckwalla, I presume.

CHAPTER II

FROM PINES TO PLATEAU



CHAPTER II

From Pines to Plateau

VIRTUALLY every article consumed or sold in Payson comes in by truck from Globe so there was no use in growling the next morning when I learned that gasoline cost thirty-five cents a gallon.

“Turn to your right at the next corner and left at the fork of the road about twelve miles out and you can’t miss Flagstaff. There’s a couple of detours in the forest.”

Up and over the hill winds the road — a red-brown ribbon through the heavy timber. Pines and pines and the shadows of pines as far as the eye can see. Revise your ideas of Arizona, you who mentally picture the state as an arid, treeless desert! Those who travel by railroad never see the timber. You’ve got to climb to find it, but above

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the six-thousand-foot mark the pines begin and from there up to the crests of the mountains they stand in solemn, stately legions. No pindling trees, these; no slim jack- or lodge-pole pine. These are big trees; hosts of them a couple of feet through at the butt, and they band the state with a belt of green from the Mogollons and White Mountains on the east straight across to Prescott, beyond which town the higher ranges cease and the country drops away to the blasting, mirage-haunted Harque Hala Desert. Cool cloisters of brown trunks and dark green tracery of needles against the blue sky; a sanctuary of shade which, thank God, the government has preserved from the spoilation of the timberman. It's good to be alive and smell the sun on the pines; good to listen to the wind through the branches, to the harsh shriek of blue piñon jays, and to the musical chatter of a little stream which the road crosses again and again.

It's a hundred and three miles from Payson to Flagstaff — good road all the way except for a few short stretches of detour around new construction work. Down Long Valley, past Soldier Lake and Lake Mary and Mormon Lake — large bodies of water totally unexpected at an altitude of 7,000 feet — and on through the pines to the county-seat of Coconino County, a pretty little town under the shadow of the San Francisco Peaks, the tallest

From Pines to Plateau

mountains in Arizona. Their Navajo name is "Where the snow never melts," and not until late summer are their naked summits, 13,000 feet in the air, free from patches of white. All the year round one can find snow-banks in the deeper cañons.

One might very profitably spend a week or more in Flagstaff and each day take a trip to some new and different point of interest. There is a toll road, kept in excellent condition, that works up through the pines to a point well above timber-line on the San Francisco peaks that tower over the little town. To the south are Lake Mary and Mormon Lake and marvelous Oak Creek Cañon. Eastward, a long round trip for one day, is Meteor Crater in Cañon Diablo, and the large petrified forests near Adamana. In the first location mentioned, some thousand or so centuries ago, a meteorite had a head-on collision with this terrestrial sphere of ours and plowed a hole that is a couple of miles in circumference. Several mining companies have spent fortunes in prospecting work to locate the main body of the meteorite. Meteoric iron contains a very high percentage of nickel and is quite valuable. Bits of it are also in great demand as curios. Every curio store in Arizona has on display stickpins and cuff-links and other jewelry made from it.

Within what one might call the metropolitan area

Roads to Roam

of Flagstaff are the interesting ice caves out back of O'Leary Peak, the prehistoric ruins at Eldon and Wupatki; and Sunset Mountain, an extinct volcanic cone that gets its name from the deep red color of the ash of which it is composed. No matter what the hour, it glows as though bathed in the last level rays of the setting sun.

One short, easy, and interesting side-trip from "Flag" is to the "small-house" cliff-dwellings in Walnut Cañon. The low and shallow caves did not permit the erection of the vast communal houses as are found further north, but the walls of the cañon are full of tiny houses where the timid agriculturists of a dozen or more centuries ago hid from their more warlike, rapacious neighbors. Even the Kiowa, according to his own traditions, made raids from his home in Texas as far west as the Coconino plateau and Havasu Cañon! Life wasn't easy for the cliff-dweller, but he survived for a long time, tilling his cornfields and his squash-patches and at the first sign of danger fleeing to his almost inaccessible refuges in the high ledges. Only many generations of sandalled feet could have worn those deep steps from the "small houses" to the waterholes in the bed of the cañon.

The existence of the Walnut Cañon ruins has been known for a long time. They are easily reached and have been visited by thousands of the genus *asinus americanus*

From Pines to Plateau

maximus. Initials are chipped on the 'dobe-plastered walls, scratched in the soot from prehistoric fires, and painted, with dates and supposedly attractive captions, on ramparts that were raised before Columbus propositioned Isabella. This name-scribbling practice is certainly calculated to instill a love of his fellows in one's breast. "Let me live in a house by the side of the road and be a friend to man!"

Praise the Lord, there are some few places the tourist can't reach and some monuments far too vast for him to deface. The initial-carver must gnash his teeth in disappointed fury when he stands on the brink of the Grand Cañon of the Colorado or passes beneath the sheer mass of El Capitan in the Yosemite!

The sight of some nobody's initials scratched or painted on the rocks at some place of great scenic beauty is maddening; but the application of a calm philosophy to the subject shows that the impulse to record one's passing must be as old as the first peregrinations of man. Many of the petroglyphs found throughout the Southwest must be nothing more than this. And witness the famous El Morro near Zuni. This great butte was, for hundreds of years, a signpost for every wandering friar or soldier crossing the desert from Santa Fé to the Hopi villages, to Zuni, or en route to old Mexico over the trail that Coronado

Roads to Roam

blazed. "*Pasó por aquí*," they scratched into the smooth rock faces, adding their names and the date in old-fashioned, abbreviated script — and today the place is a shrine! And a little later on in our wanderings of this summer we will stare at the handiwork and hazard suppositions as to the identity of another name-scribbler whose yielding to an irresistible impulse has resulted in the christening of a cliff-dwelling as "Inscription House."

And while we're on this subject, there could be no better place to tell the story of how one monomaniac got his tail properly braided by the hard-boiled rangers at Grand Cañon.

Everywhere that one travels through the West one encounters, on rocks, fenceposts, trees, or any other surface that presents itself, evidences of the peculiar phobia of a sect that believes undying grace can be attained by painted signs broadening various noble sentiments. Biblical verses, and such polite queries and injunctions as "Where will YOU spend Eternity?" and "Repent now!" are daubed everywhere. Bridge abutments and other flat surfaces are much favored for these artistic endeavors. I have actually seen one or two of the individuals themselves; wild-eyed fanatics in ramshackle cars on which psalms and proverbs fought for prominence with dirty

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bedrolls, cooking utensils, and a washline for dish-cloths and the baby's diapers.

Well, one day some folks standing on the rim at Grand Cañon noticed an individual climbing up Bright Angel Trail. In his hand was a dripping paintbrush, in his eye the frenzied triumph of a noble mission successfully accomplished. Later in the afternoon one of the regular trail parties discovered the inscription "GOD IS LOVE" displayed in two-foot letters on a smooth rock-face at a turn of the trail. Authorities were notified and two and two promptly added together to make six.

The rangers who so effectively protect our national parks and monuments are a curious lot. They wouldn't be doing that work if they didn't love it far beyond all dreams of salary, convenience, or social contacts with their fellowman. Those at Grand Cañon apparently thought that the mighty gulf itself was sufficient evidence of the existence of an omnipotent Creator without the additional evidence of the religious one's mural legend.

They did some hasty sleuthing with the result that the gentleman was apprehended just before the car in which he was riding arrived at Maine, a junction on the highway between Flagstaff and Williams. He was escorted back to Grand Cañon, given a wire brush and a cake of sand-

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soap, and an option of erasing his sentiments or taking a long look at the interior of the Coconino County jail. While the gentleman's religious convictions may have been developed to a high state of perfection, he was lacking in the stuff of which martyrs are made. He took one look at the determined faces about him and meekly walked down the trail. His journey to the Pacific coast was delayed for two days before the job was completed to the satisfaction of Tillotson, the head ranger, and I'm willing to place a small bet that in the future he will use the mails to notify the members of the U. S. National Park Service of the abounding affection of the Almighty!

Flagstaff is on the National Old Trails Highway and is, with Williams, the principal port of entry to Grand Cañon. There are two routes to the cañon from Flagstaff. The shorter, and the more generally used, is to drive west on the highway to Williams and then straight north about sixty miles to the rim. The alternate route, unknown to most travelers — longer, but far more worth while — is to go east some six or eight miles to Eldon (there's a prehistoric ruin right at the junction, by the way) then north to Cameron, forty-five miles further, and thence west another forty or fifty miles to enter the national park through the back door.

You leave the pines behind within twenty miles. The

From Pines to Plateau

road courses across Dead Man's Flat, a level, semi-desert tract of sagebrush and with occasional outcroppings of volcanic rock. A pink and ocher wall draws in from far away to the eastward across the invisible Little Colorado River. It becomes more and more brilliant, more fantastic in variegated hues, as you proceed. There are pinks and reds, salmon, magenta, bronze, and brown; yellow, ocher, tan, and buff; steel-blue, gray-blue, violet, purple, and mauve — all in the sands, the rocks, and the broken cliff-faces of the Painted Desert.

Here lies the true Painted Desert: along the eastern bank of the Little Colorado River from the falls, some miles above Winslow, to the mouth of Moencopie Wash. The use of the term to describe any other terrain in the Southwest is not justified. In spite of the railroad advertisements, the Painted Desert is not visible from any train, nor has any person ever seen it from the main highway, U. S. No. 66. Dr. Herbert E. Gregory, whose geologic knowledge of northeastern Arizona is unrivalled, has suggested that the term be extended to include the region identical in character to the north, along the Echo Cliffs from Moencopie Wash to the Colorado River.

Geologically, if one is interested, the valley of the Little Colorado is cut through the light red, massive formation known as the De Chelly (pronounced Shay) sandstone.

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To the east, above this, along the foot of Newberry Mesa, lies a strip of the Shinárumpong conglomerate, while the mesa crest is the Chinle formation — shales, thin sandstones, and limestones. Those varied strata, their decomposition, erosion, and staining, have painted the country in a bewildering array of pastel hues. They can never be photographed, never adequately painted; they must be seen, and the sight is worth the trip.

And here's a tip to those who visit Grand Cañon, the Painted Desert, and other spots where proper appreciation depends upon a grasp of the infinite gradations of color. Turn your head on the side so that you gaze with your eyes in a vertical plane rather than a horizontal. The effect is almost startling. The colors are brought out much more clearly and depths revealed with an almost stereoscopic value. I'm no expert in optics so will attempt no explanation of why so slight a change in position should effect such a result. I know only that it does.

So mighty — and so well press-agented — is the Grand Cañon of the Colorado that very few people ever hear of the cañon of the Little Colorado, skirted by the Navahopi Road from Cameron to the Coconino Plateau. Compared to the gorge into which it empties it is, of course, little more than an irrigation ditch, but there is something mighty impressive in its sheer walls and, to one on the



THE GLOOMY, IMPENETRABLE CAÑON OF THE LITTLE COLORADO

From Pines to Plateau

brink, its unguessable depths. At Cameron the river is but thirty or forty feet below the level of the surrounding country, but so swiftly does it cut, chisel, and burrow its way into the earth that when one reaches it again, fifteen miles or so by a road that writhes like a broken-backed snake through the hills and steep gullies, the bottom is visible from only one or two vantage points. The cañon of the Little Colorado is narrow, only a few hundred feet from rim to rim; the eroded buff walls are stained a deep chocolate brown in many places, and there is a somberness, a not-disfiguring grimness about it that is wholly lacking in the Grand Cañon.

Within a couple of years there will be a splendid hard-surfaced highway from Grand Canyon Station all the way to Desert View. The road from Cameron to the park limits is usually in very fair shape. It's not particularly dangerous but it's plenty tricky in a few spots — with one brutal hill by which you climb to the first break of the Coconino Plateau. Driving it at night, or with more than four drinks of high-powered Arizona "corn" under the belt, is most emphatically not recommended. In this connection, it might be well to remark that night driving is a good thing to avoid on most Western roads, particularly when they are through the mountains or broken country. It can be done, of course, but it's not safe for the inexperi-

Roads to Roam

enced. Turns are frequently very sharp and are very rarely marked. Sand is treacherous and hills are so steep that headlight rays shoot straight into the air and reveal nothing of the road beyond. Night driving, unless one is thoroughly familiar with the country and the highway, is simply courting disaster — and on some roads one would have a long, long wait before the arrival of aid. The best advice of any given to Winifred Dixon, author of “Westward Hoboes,” was that handed out by the mother of her irrepressible companion, Toby.

“Don’t drive at night,” was the maternal parting injunction which the two girls apparently disregarded about seven days out of each week. The story of their hegira, much interlined, is one of my favorites and I often wonder if those two precious pilgrims, safe at home in Boston, ever realized how unbelievably lucky they were. I have followed them over many of the miles they drove and I can feel the goose-pimples chasing up and down my spine when I read of their adventures. For inexperienced drivers to take some of the trips they did, at night, and come through uncrashed is nothing short of miraculous. It is a book guaranteed to convert any atheist.

One other observation and then this dissertation on “How to do it” is ended — don’t be afraid to use your gears both in climbing and descending hills. Only a fool

From Pines to Plateau

tries to come down a long grade in high gear, and it's when two fools meet that accidents occur. Brakes that will stop a car instantly without grabbing or skidding will also save a few gray hairs and cold sweats.

The road from where one reaches the Coconino Plateau and continues on that level toward Grand Canyon village loops back and forth through the pine, cedar, and piñon that grow to the very brink of the chasm. The drive is neither particularly beautiful nor interesting. It's dusty and, late in the afternoon with the sun dead in one's eyes, it's uncomfortable. The total distance is just about a hundred miles from Flagstaff — a pleasant afternoon's run, permitting plenty of time for photographs and sight-seeing.

At Grand Canyon village, perched right on the rim of the vast gorge, is El Tovar — and there's no better hotel anywhere in the world! This advertisement is unsolicited, unpaid for, and devoutly sincere. There are larger hotels than El Tovar, there are hostelrys more expensive; but there could be none better managed nor could money purchase more perfect service. Particularly noteworthy is all this when one considers that El Tovar is hundreds of miles from a market — virtually all their vegetables and fruit come from California, their meats from Kansas City and Chicago — and that every drop of water is

Roads to Roam

brought in tank cars from the perpetual snow of the San Francisco Mountains, 125 miles away. As might be inferred, I'm strong for El Tovar. If the Red Gods are kind, I'll spend three or four days or a week there every year of my life.

Fifty feet from the hotel the ground ceases. There is an iron guard-rail to protect the unwary and one is conscious that beyond that slender barrier lies a void. Only in Arizona, land of paradoxes, could or would such a mighty gulf be hidden from view until one is within a dozen strides of the brink. And the proper introduction to it — particularly if you have been there before and are piloting a first-timer — is to stroll to the edge, jerk a nonchalant thumb toward the abyss, and remark casually:

“Well, there's the Big Ditch!”

CHAPTER III

RIM-SIDE ROVINGS AND RAVINGS!



CHAPTER III

Rim-Side Rovings and Ravings!

THE Grand Cañon!

If all the postal cards that have been sent away from there were returned they would fill it, and if all the adjectives that have been expended on its marvels could be strung end to end there would be a wide, vowel-paved, consonant-buttressed bridge from rim-rock to rim-rock.

The customary procedure, particularly for those who write or who fancy they write, is to say that "the wonders of this Titan of all chasms are beyond words to describe"

Roads to Roam

— and then proceed to utilize a bundle of some five or ten thousand of those same words in a futile effort to make people who have never seen the cañon realize what it looks like.

The author of this most limited edition intends avoiding that pitfall. He has a perfect appreciation of his own limitations. He is not going to attempt to describe the indescribable or unscrew the inscrutable. He has seen the Grand Cañon in winter and in summer, in sunshine, snow, cloud, fog, and rain. He has seen it in darkness and under the witching silver magic of the full moon. He knows that it is always the same yet ever changing with each new phase of light or shifting cloud-shadows. He knows that he could never describe it nor will he try. The Grand Cañon has been where it is, as it is, for some millions of years. The chances are excellent that it will remain there for some time longer. Go, thou, and see it for yourself and realize as never before the insignificance of man and the ephemeral quality of his most vaunted works.

The Grand Cañon was very adequately described by a writer who died some thirty centuries before America was even discovered. A gentleman named David gets the credit for it, but I like to think that it was some unknown wanderer in the far places who watched the sun go down

Rim-Side Rovings and Ravings!

in a flame of purple and crimson and gold, and, from the depths of his soul, sang:

“ Oh, Lord . . . when I consider . . . that
which thou hast ordained . . . what is
man, that thou art mindful of him? ”

Statistics are safer than adjective, phrase, and simile — and in this instance as instructive. The Grand Cañon is approximately 200 miles long; to follow every inch of the rim, from Glen Cañon to Boulder Cañon and return on the opposite side, would undoubtedly entail a stroll of some ten thousand miles — and that's the rankest kind of guesswork! The width, from rim to rim, varies greatly. At Grand View one is nearly twenty-five miles from the North Rim; at El Tovar about twelve; and there are points in Glen Cañon and in Marble Cañon where it is much less.

The river itself is invisible from the rim at El Tovar. It is hidden in the black depths of the Granite Gorge more than 5,000 feet below. This invisibility of the Colorado seems to disappoint greatly the tourists who rush to the brink for a view of the cañon.

“ Where's the river? ” they ask, dozens of them each day. “ Where's the Colorado? ”

“ Down there,” they are told patiently, “ down at the

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bottom of that dark, narrow cut. You can't see it from here."

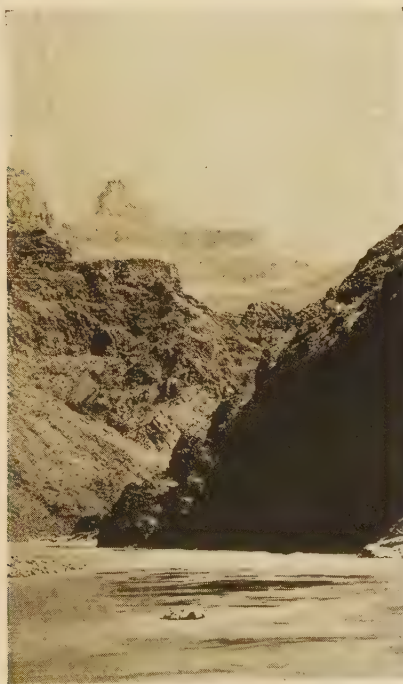
"Oh!" And they gaze somewhat reproachfully at the man who knows where the river is, as though it were his fault that the Colorado hides so coyly.

This mad desire to see the river is most incomprehensible. The works of the Colorado — the great chasm it has cut through the slope of the Kaibab (the north) and the Coconino (the south) Plateaux, are far more remarkable than the stream itself. No clear, limpid, purling, mountain brook could have accomplished such a task. The Colorado is a working river and it recognizes no union hours. Its shift is twenty-four hours daily, seven days a week. It seems to know that the job is not yet done nor will be until the black depths of the Granite Gorge are chiselled away to the level of the sea. The river still has nearly two thousand feet of flint-hard granite to cut away, but it's doing it at the rate of an inch or two a year.

A worker, is the Colorado, and like all toilers its garments are soiled and its hands grimy. A dirtier, uglier, more sullen river no one could imagine. Even in its worst rapids it does not seem to fling itself joyously into the air after a crashing leap on a rock or against a cliff-face. It throws itself upward ponderously, deliberately, and then falls back to resume its task of hastening onward



“ GRAND CAÑON DEFIES PHOTOGRAPHY OR DESCRIPTION ”



IN THE GRANITE GORGE

Rim-Side Rovings and Ravings!

with its burden of abrasive sand. From Wyoming, from Utah, from Colorado, from Arizona, and from New Mexico comes the sand and silt that the Colorado carries in suspension — the sand that has eroded the Grand Cañon. The water is heavy with it, sluggish with its own weight in riffle, pool, rapid, and infrequent quiet stretch. A man can swim, with some difficulty and little pleasure, in the more placid reaches of the river. In the rapids the chances of even the most expert swimmer would be slim indeed. From Green River to Needles men say grimly, meaningly, and knowingly: “The Colorado does not give up her dead!”

Others have realized the work, in terms of physics, of which the Colorado is capable. Within a couple of years — assuming that California quits playing hog and Arizona dog-in-the-manger — construction will have been begun on the Boulder Dam, harnessing the stream that made the Grand Cañon. Maybe they can get away with it — but I know I’ll never choose to live anywhere below that barrier. To me the Delaware, the Hudson, even the Mississippi, are streams; the Colorado is a distinct personality. She will probably submit very passively to the harnessing process. Her waters will back up until the swift rapids are quiet pools and the granite gorge a long, narrow, placid lake.

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Then will come the awakening. The sullen red river may brood in her fetters for a hundred years — a century is nothing to her — but then one day she will realize that she is bound. She will wait patiently. “*Der Tag*,” to her, will be a warm spring following suddenly on a long severe winter. The snows, deep on the mountains of Utah, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Wyoming, and Nevada, will all go out at once. Those snows have but one avenue of escape to the sea. The Grand River, the Green, the San Juan, the Little Colorado will be raging floods and every drop of that water will have to pass to the sea by the Colorado.

Boulder Dam will be directly across that path — and when *Der Tag* comes I don't want to be in Needles or Yuma! If this be superstitious crape-hanging, make the most of it!

They've bridged the Colorado now. Not in Grand Cañon, but at Lee's Ferry where the turbulent river, after plunging from Glen Cañon, hesitates an instant before entering the sheer-walled depths of Marble Cañon. By 1929 you'll be able to drive from the south rim to the north by way of Cameron, Tuba Gap, Lee's Ferry, and Kanab. When you cross that bridge say “Thank you” to the Navajo Indians. They built it for you, or, rather, a paternal government approved the use of \$100,-

Rim-Side Rovings and Ravings!

000 of the tribal funds, derived from oil leases on the reservation, for building a bridge that might possibly be used by a dozen Navajos in the course of a year. One should not criticize such benevolence towards the wards of the nation, and only the vilest kind of a muck-raker would insinuate that the money was stolen. Better far to spend the Navajos' money for a permanent structure like a bridge than to waste it frivolously in buying hay for the Indians' sheep and goats during the winter or in developing water supplies, building reservoirs, and placing catchment basins in such arid parts of the reservation as Monument Valley or between Red Lake and the mouth of the Tsagi! The Indians live in the two areas named; live there and engage in a year-long struggle to find forage and water for their flocks. I'm willing to bet that there's not a dozen Navajos living within twenty-five miles of that bridge.

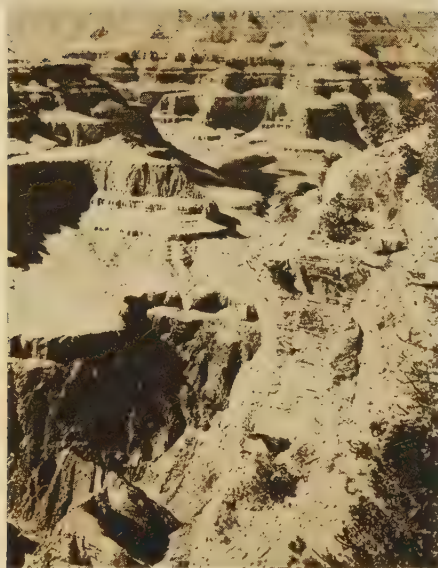
When you go to Grand Cañon try to do it by automobile. Possession of your own car, the ability to direct your own trips and plan your own time is of inestimable advantage. Drive out to the various points and there sit a while and let your eyes range back and forth and up and down. Slowly a realization of the vastness of that chasm will come to you.

There are dozens of vantage points from which to view

Roads to Roam

the Grand Cañon, dozens of shaded spots where one can escape the crowds that are hustled from place to place in the Harveycars. Each lover of the cañon has his favorite — his “best view” — and this writer’s is unreservedly that revealed from Lipan Point. It’s a long drive, but they’re improving the roads every year. East about twenty-two miles, toward Desert View, and then turn left about a half-mile to the rim. Here one is well away from the crowds. There is little danger of being disturbed by anxious mothers screaming at Johnny not to go closer to the edge. One can gaze south and west through the riot of color that is the Grand Cañon, trace the course of the muddy Colorado for miles through its gorge, and then turn his eyes to the north and look out across the Echo Cliffs and Cummings Mesa to the great dome-shaped bulk of Navajo Mountain. Go there, to Lipan Point, by all means. Go alone — or with someone on whose heart the cañon has laid its hand as it has on yours. Go — and meet your Maker face to face!

Almost did I approach description who had forsworn it. It was a narrow escape, but I’ll risk one word, describe one phase of the Grand Cañon that to me is its most impressive characteristic. Reams of fair white paper have been covered with adjective-besprinkled accounts of its size, grandeur, and majesty; its myriad formations,



"TWELVE MILES TO THE NORTH RIM"



DOWN THE YAKI TRAIL

Rim-Side Rovings and Ravings!

its geological wonders, and its unbelievable depth of color. But one thing above all others strikes me every time I see it — and that is its silence!

There is no place in God's world so still! The ocean — particularly when the breakers crash in white foam on a rocky headland under the spur of a sea-born gale — is magnificent, awe-inspiring, even terrible. The High Sierras or the Rockies, with their vistas of craggy peaks and timbered slopes, are grand. The great geysers of the Yellowstone, the gaudy coloring of their deposits, are wierd, fantastic, and unbelievable. But with all of them there is an appeal to the ear as well as to the eye. Their grandeur is not only visible but audible. The ocean surges and crashes, the pines sway in the winds that whistle through their branches, the geysers roar with a blast that can be heard for miles. Even in the depths of such great caverns as Mammoth Cave or Carlsbad one can hear, afar off, the faint splash of dripping water or the clatter of flying chips as a stalactite, centuries in the making, falls to the rocky floor.

But over the Grand Cañon broods a hush that is beyond human conception. The wind may sigh softly or even shriek through the limbs of the gnarled piñons and cedars on the rim but no echo comes from the mighty gulf. The great crimson buttes and the scarlet capes

Roads to Roam

that thrust out from the Redrock Wall seem to quiver in the midday heat; their colors soften and they draw back, ponderously yet gracefully, in the evening shadows or the clouds of a wintry morning. But it is all done soundlessly. Their majesty is eternal, their glory everlasting, and their silence is the hush that was the dawn of the Seventh Day. Go there; stretch out your arms and gather that silence and its peace into your soul!

We drive along the rim in automobiles now, speeding over hard-surfaced highways and graded dirt roads; but no matter how swiftly we drive we cannot out-pace a troop of horsemen and footmen that haunts these timbered headlands. One never sees them; they are always just ahead or just behind or concealed by the dark shadow of the pines, but they are, I know, always there. A stern-faced band, their body-armor and their polished casques gleaming in the hot sun, their heavy arquebuses clanking on their tired shoulders. Indian captives — slaves from Zuni and Púye and the New Mexican pueblos — toil behind with the baggage, and one — a squat, terrified Moqui — is lashed by the wrist to the saddle-pommel of a man-at-arms who rides beside the leader. The crimson and gold banner of old Spain droops from a lance and in the van is always the Cross and the dark habit of a priest,

Rim-Side Rovings and Ravings!

his deep-set eyes blazing with the fanatical idealism that carried his faith into the most hidden fastnesses of this marvelous new world.

No evangelists, they. Cross and sword went ever hand in hand and conversion was by the weight of both. The cross or the sword, Catholic Christianity or a cut throat, was the option held out to *los Indios*. We cannot admire the methods employed but splendid beyond all telling was the courage and the faith that sent them forth

“to die in the desert,
And die by the stream;
Or die on the hilltop
Dreaming a dream.”

A dream of a great Spanish Catholic empire in the New World; a dream that found its tragic awakening only through the massacres that were engendered of their own cruelty to the races they conquered; through the destruction of the Armada and the breaking of Spain's maritime domination; and through the rise of the English and French colonies along the Atlantic.

They're here at Grand Cañon. They must be. They must come back to view the river they named and to march again along the brink of that gorge which they were the first of the white race to see. What sensations must have

Roads to Roam

surged through the mind of the stout-hearted Don Garcia Lopez de Cárdenas when, in 1540, after marching for twenty days through the desert, he came to a great river with banks extending "three or four leagues into the air" (*que avia mas de tres o quatro leguas por el ayre*) and were, in addition, "broken into pinnacles higher than the tower of the Cathedral of Seville." He named the river the Colorado — the Red — but no man will ever know the precise point from which he first saw the stream, as his meager description is applicable to almost any headland of the South Rim. Evidently his discovery created little excitement for there is virtually no mention of the gorge for more than two centuries. In 1776 Padre Garces was halted "at the sight of the most profound cañons which ever onward continue, and within these flows the Colorado." During the same year another priest, Padre Hernando d'Escalante Fontaneda travelled from Santa Fé to central Utah and on his return crossed the Grand Cañon at an old Ute ford near the foot of Glen Cañon. The point was renamed *El Vado de los Padres*, and as "The Crossing of the Fathers" appears on the maps of today.

"If this is true," says Gregory, "Escalante should be credited with the most daring adventure of any of the early explorers."



“CRIMSON DEPTHS AND
ETERNAL SILENCE”



THE SUSPENSION BRIDGE ON YAKI TRAIL

Rim-Side Rovings and Ravings!

Nowhere in America is there a more forbidding, less hospitable country than that which he was compelled to traverse both north of the Colorado and, after his difficult crossing, south of that stream through the deserts of northern Arizona.

Humble apologies for this historical detour. It is out of place. Let's get on back to today and the benches at El Tovar.

There's a big kick to be found at Grand Cañon — particularly on one's second, third, or subsequent visits — in sitting on one of the benches along the rim and listening to the comments and observing the reactions of those who see it for the first time. They come in droves every day, mutter appropriate ohs and ahs, point vest-pocket cameras at the gorge and click industriously, and then wander back to the hotel or to Bright Angel Camp in search of food. There's a young fortune in the photograph-film concession at the resort, but that too — like the mules you ride and the coat-hangers in the closets — is branded "Fred Harvey."

We are told — and it would be lese majeste to doubt the printed word — that strong men have been known to weep on beholding the marvels of the cañon; that atheists murmur the Name of Deity as they fall to their knees in reverent awe.

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“No one,” we learn, “can gaze into the depths of this Titan of Chasms and remain unmoved!”

Let's amend that and say, ungrammatically, “almost no one.” The American development of the Anglo-Saxon has produced a creature that is not particularly demonstrative and that entertains a lively horror of anything that appears to be grandstand play. Most are content to stare in silence — moved, perhaps deeply, but not obviously. Those who speak murmur “gosh” or “she's sure deep, ain't she!” and usually supplement this observation with a demand for information as to the whereabouts of the river. One man, they say, gazed spellbound for some minutes into the abyss, finally turning to his wife and remarking: “Mary, at last I've found a place to throw my dulled razor-blades!”

Others, in spite of the literature on the subject, are not impressed. One lady — I dared not turn my head so know her only as an F. F. V. — a Feverish Feminine Voice — expressed her opinion most emphatically.

“So that's it, is it?” she inquired of the world at large and her companions in particular. “Well, all I've got to say is that I'll know what to call anybody that tells me its twelve miles over to that other side. I know! 'T'ain't more'n three, or maybe three an' a half!”

Another, also feminine, was even more protestingly

Rim-Side Rovings' and Ravings!

disappointed. She was a shrivelled wisp of a creature of probably sixty, anxious to inform everyone that after "the mister" had been "taken" some six months previously that she had sold the farm in Ohio and was now en route to "Californy," the abiding-place of a married daughter, in an automobile piloted by another daughter and a son-in-law.

"So that's what you dragged me up here sixty miles off the highway to see, is it?" she remanded acidly. "What is it? What is there about it that's so wonderful? It's nothing but a big hole in the ground full of a lot of red rocks! If I'd knowed that was all there was to it I'd have stayed right there in Williams. It ain't worth the trip over that rough road!"

The rangers' favorite story is that of the lady who told her guide that "the only thing I can't understand is how the river got 'way down there at the bottom."

"Lady," he told her solemnly, "that's one of the funniest things there is about this here place. Th' river used t' be up here on th' rim, but one day it just slipped off!"

One other instance. I sat, towards evening, on the rim and watched the sun over the gorge. A man came and shared the bench with me. The cañon of Bright Angel Creek was a black gash sharply defined in the opposite walls, the great buttes and capes seemed to glow with a

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warmth of their own in the soft light, thrusting themselves nearer, nearer, as their shadows lengthened. The silence was overpowering. Suddenly, offensively, with no music to temper its shrill inappropriateness, there rose a piping chorus of human voices.

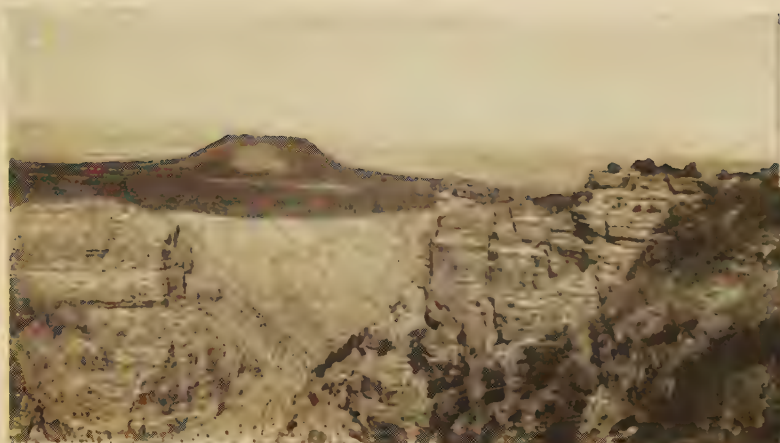
"Praise God from Whom all blessings flow," squeaked a visiting "tour" of Kansas and Oklahoma clergy and their women-folk. "Praise Him, all creatures here below —"

The man on the other end of the bench turned a wise, kindly face towards me.

"I'm a preacher by trade," he said slowly, "but *that* — *here* — is what I call piffing!"

Thus do you find them at Grand Cañon, and reach the conclusion that of your fellow humans some possess souls, others merely life to distinguish them from vegetable or mineral products.

The splendors of the Grand Cañon are as well exploited as any national park in America. The A. T. & S. F. Railroad — or, rather, the Fred Harvey Co. which is one and the same thing — has a monopoly on every amusement, the use of every trail, the horses or mules you ride, the food you eat, and the water with which you fill yourself or your radiator. It's a benevolent despotism, however, and there's none of the gouging that the Government rep-



CEDAR MOUNTAIN FROM DESERT VIEW



" . . . THE TRAILS ARE BOULEVARDS "

Rim-Side Rovings and Ravings!

representatives appear to condone, if not encourage, in other parks. A little competition might do a world of good, but it would be difficult to determine where or how that competition could be introduced. El Tovar prices are high, but worth every cent one pays, and a rival hotel would be forced to charge double El Tovar rates or perish miserably unless it too had a great railroad on which to depend for transportation of food and the water that is virtually non-existent on the south rim. A charge of eight or nine dollars (memory is faulty) is made for a trip down the Yaki or Bright Angel Trails to the river and return. A fair price for a day's trip, even including the appetizing lunch that is provided, but each one of the three principal trails — Bright Angel, Yaki, and Hermit Rim — represents an expenditure of upwards of \$100,000!

And those trails are magnificent! They are boulevards from the Coconino Plateau to the depths of the Granite Gorge. All loose rocks have been removed, all ledges and obstructions graded to an easy incline, and a neat retaining wall has been built up along the outer edge. Though the towerists return with tales of dangers narrowly averted, of breathless adventures on dizzy heights — and the guides encourage these harmless self-deceits — the Grand Cañon trails are far safer than pedestrian

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travel at any city street crossing. The fact that there has never been an accident on any one of them is proof enough.

The Fred Harvey Company will take you on any trip you care to make — or for which you are prepared to pay. Their big automobiles cross and re-cross the desert in all directions, safely and as comfortably as desert roads, or no roads, permit. They'll arrange pack-train trips of one day or a dozen, and bring you back right side up.

Take some of the side trips at Grand Cañon — one to the river, at least — but if you have a few extra days there by all means take the one trip that is the finest of all; an easy journey to as beautiful a spot as exists anywhere on this continent. Go to the home of the Supai Indians, to Havasu Cañon, the Land of the Sky Blue Waters!

CHAPTER IV

*THE LAND OF THE SKY BLUE
WATERS*



CHAPTER IV

The Land of the Sky Blue Waters

“WE came out of the earth!” say the Supais, and one accepts the legend who stands on the crest of the great white cliffs at Hilltop and stares out and down through leagues of blue into the red and tan and other depths of the cañons that men have named Lee and Cataract and Havasu. If the Supais did not come from the earth, certainly they have returned to it!

Immediately at one's feet, precipitous in their abrupt break from the line of the plateau surface, drop the sheer cliffs of sandstone and limestone that are the surface strata throughout this region. Below them, framed by their bluff mass, one stares into a scarlet gash in the earth — a jagged, bleeding scar that is the course of the

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cañons through the crimson sandstone and shales of the Supai formations.

I had phoned ahead for a horse and guide to meet me — the Park Service has a phone, quite frequently in working order, from Grand Canyon village to Supai — and so I sat on the rimrock at Hilltop and waited. It's the end of the automobile road, thirty-six miles from El Tovar. Hundreds of feet below me I could see a faint hairline of silver meandering into the red depths. This must be the trail to Supai, since it could go nowhere else, and presently substantiation was received by the sight of two ants crawling over a smear of russetty-brown paint that someone had splashed on the yellow rocks. Half or three-quarters of an hour later the ants had climbed to my level and had materialized as a mounted Indian leading a saddled pony. His name, he informed me, was Jimmy and he placed the onus of his delayed arrival directly on me by the monosyllabic statement "you come quick."

The trail into Havasu Cañon is no Bright Angel — no beautifully engineered, walled, swept, and manicured boulevard. It was laid out by the Indians who sought only the most direct route and is most decidedly rough, particularly for the first eight hundred or thousand feet where it shoots almost straight down along a narrow ledge zigzagging across the face of the limestone cliff.

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There's no law against walking, however, if one desires, although walking is mighty hard work over the rough boulders and it's far simpler and less laborious to climb on a horse and follow your mounted guide. Jimmy and his fellows never walk and, if it's any satisfaction to the timid, the trail is not dangerous unless a horse should fall. To such irremediable awkwardness the rugged little ponies of the Supais are not prone. Incidentally, we'll ride far rougher trails together before this summer's trip is concluded. Havasu is simply a good introduction to what is to come.

Down, down, down. "Into the earth" for fourteen miles. The sculptured limestone cliffs recede until they are only dingy white curtains that constrict the horizon, curtains with black dots to show where piñon and cedar and twisted juniper cling stubbornly to tiny ledges and crannies in their sheer walls. A red streak appears in the ground at my feet. It rises and, rising, widens, seeming to thrust back the yellower rocks. Presently it is waist high, a crimson trench in which the ponies trudge stolidly along, and I realize that I have passed from one geologic era to another and have gone a little deeper "into the earth."

There's a pleasure in traveling with an Indian. One is never annoyed by garrulousness or by the necessity of

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making conversation, polite or otherwise. He rides ahead—a square figure in his American-made saddle; soiled, but not unpicturesque in stained hat, shabby denim overalls under well-worn chaps, and with huge star-rowelled spurs trailing from the heels of his cowboy boots. He never looks back. The pad-pad of your mount's unshod feet on the rocks, the soft rustle as it shuffles along through the sand, tells him that you're close behind. You are as free as though alone in this lonely spot; free to swelter in the blistering heat waves that dance back from the crimson walls, free to admire and to marvel at curious formations and erosions, and free to let your eye wander up the sheer sides of precipitous cliff-faces, rocky walls growing ever higher as the trail follows along the bed of the ever-deepening cañon.

At the junction of Lee and Cataract Cañons, Jimmy turns aside to show me a group of prehistoric petroglyphs pecked in the smooth sandstone. I photograph them, emulating a very awkward fly as I cling to a narrow cleft in the rocks. Jimmy, gripping a convenient knob, gets a firm hold on my belt with the other hand and I lean far back so as to get the thirty inches distance necessary even with a portrait attachment slipped over the regular lens. There's a straightaway drop of twenty-odd feet to the ground below, so I hope, as I focus, that James does

The Land of the Sky Blue Waters

not decide to scratch or to spit on his hands. Though we're told the Supai beds are very soft strata, from this altitude they look plenty hard enough.

These particular petroglyphs in Havasu Cañon have been widely and most assiduously discussed. They represent, according to the most ardent and unscientific supporters of their very ancient origin, a man in deadly combat with a mastodon or elephant, a giant tortoise or turtle, and, *mirabile dictu!*, the picturization of a specimen of the long-tailed, kangaroo type of carnivorous dinosaur!

Reason tells us that man and the great lizards certainly were not contemporaneous anywhere in the world. Mammalian life was still in a very rudimentary stage of development when the big saurians cavorted hither and yon over Arizona. Oh, yes, they were here; don't kid yourself about that! We'll see their tracks in the sandstone near Moencopie, and if you feel like making a long, tough horseback trip I can show you a spot in Neskla-Nizadi Cañon, a branch of Navajo Cañon, where about four of the big beasties cavorted around. Erosion has exposed an area of Jurassic strata where their tracks can be traced for nearly fifty feet. The Navajos, it might be interesting to remark, call them *Yeitso-betay* — footprints of the gods.

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But we'll have to let the dinosaur figure drop. There's no scale by which to judge it and its outline might be intended to represent a kangaroo rat or a "high-tailer" lizard such as still abound in the Southwest.

Science — or at least the major portion of scientists — angrily refute any theory that man reached America prior to the glacial period or was to be found here contemporaneously with the mastodon or *elephas*. I have no desire to combat this mass of superior knowledge. I won't even mention the Lenape stone, the elephantine figures on certain Palenque ruins, or a petroglyph in the Rincon Mountains (Turkey Creek Cañon) which, though possessing six legs and ears resembling those of a terrier, is also invested with most pronouncedly proboscidean features. My only comment on the Havasu Cañon pictograph is that if it is *not* a man fighting with an elephant — or, rather, an elephant playing rough with a man — I don't know what it is and decline to guess. It looks more like an elephant than anything else.

Here, at the junction of Lee and Cataract Cañons, we could turn, did we desire, and regain the Coconino Plateau over what is probably the most dangerous trail in America — a six-inch ledge around a mighty headland with, on your right, a sheer twenty-five-hundred-foot

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“ — drop into nothin' beneath you
As straight as a beggar can spit! ”

So far as I know this gulf has never been measured. They told me it was twenty-five hundred feet. I can say positively that it looks like twenty-five thousand! Right at the most perilous spot, where the narrow ledge rounds a shoulder, some wag has daubed a skull and crossbones on the rock and, beneath it, the legend: SUICIDE POINT! You are told that here an old prospector and his three burros fell and still lie in the cañon so far below. One recalls the burro's reputation for sure-footedness — and thinks long, sad thoughts of letters unanswered, bills unpaid, places unseen, and girls unkissed. A truly charming spot, Suicide Point!

But the trail to Supai does not follow such a perilous track. The only real hardship is its dryness and the heat that is reflected up from the rocky floor and back from the red walls with an even greater intensity that is found in the direct rays of the Arizona sun above.

Deeper we go, and deeper. Down and further down! “Up” and “down” are the only directions known at Supai; there are no compass points. Walls that close in almost to the point of suffocation, sections that the sun

Roads to Roam

does not touch for twenty minutes of the day, dry sand and dry, hot rocks. The crimson ramparts of the Supai beds that appeared first as a thin red line encroaching upon the buff sandstone now tower far over our heads, framing irregular panels of the clear blue Arizona skies. This is a waterless land — arid, hot, rocky, inhospitable. Only one waterhole — the luke-warm, stinking, alkaline Topocobya Spring, uncomfortably abundant with animalculae — is found between Hilltop and Supai. To the south, across the plateau towards Seligman, there are areas where for a hundred miles there are no springs or waterholes whatever.

We turn a bend of the cañon and are instantly grateful for the cool shadow of the western wall. Ahead of us, conspicuous against the chocolate-brown rocks, lies a patch of vivid green — the green of cottonwood and sycamore and alder; a green of growing things that can mean only the presence of water. Nor can you who dwell in the East, in the well-watered valleys of Pennsylvania or by the dark, pine-girded New Jersey lakes, realize what that means.

Here in Havasu it is little less than a miracle, a freak of water where water has no geologic business to be! No man knows whence that water comes. Some have said there is an underground river from the San Francisco peaks



A HORSEMAN IN HAVASU CAÑON

The Land of the Sky Blue Waters

more than a hundred miles southeast, a subterranean stream that breaks to the surface in Havasu Cañon; but there is little geologic evidence to support that theory. Certainly the chemical composition of Havasu water is markedly dissimilar from the snow-water of Flagstaff that is piped from the San Franciscos.

Here, there, and everywhere springs leap bubbling and gurgling out of the limestone. There are hundreds of them within a space of a couple of acres and in no time at all their hurrying, unfailing waters have united to form a river. It's called Havasu Creek — a brawling, tumbling, noisy stream that rushes over rocks and through cornfields and orchards towards the Colorado eight miles away. As I ford the river — and the swift water comes well toward my stirrups — I can see several of the springs gushing out of the sandy bed. So strong is their flow that there is a distinct "boil" on the surface of the stream.

I've never run across any record of a chemical analysis of the waters of Havasu, although surely they have been made. Only chemically could an explanation be made of their color — their unbelievable blue. It has no sparkle, no life; it does not dance and gleam in the sun. It is an opaque, solid blue, the blue of a perfect turquoise. I've seen the Gulf Stream off Florida, the Pacific under a cloudless sky between Bodega Bay and the mouth of Russian

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River, the Mexican Gulf at Corpus Christi, but there never was water like Havasu! Even in the tiny irrigating ditches it is blue, slipping along between the mud banks, hiding the bottom with its own opacity, and blue, blue, blue! I called its color the blue of a perfect turquoise; it is all of that, but a more homely and equally apt comparison would be to say that it looks like a strong solution of washing-blue and possesses the same soapy appearance.

And here, in the little oasis between the springs and the point where, a couple of miles below, progress is barred by the steep cliffs down which the stream plunges in its haste to reach the Colorado, dwell the Havasupai Indians (generally called Supais), a pitiful remnant of a once-powerful tribe. They say that John Doyle Lee — that much-married, pioneering Seventh Danite of Brigham Young's; the leader in the terrible Mountain Meadows Massacre; he who left his name in Lee Cañon and at Lee's Ferry — came through here in the late 'sixties and taught the Supais how to irrigate their lands and grow crops other than corn, squash, and beans. They have alfalfa now, and fruit trees — apricots, peaches, and figs. Supai knows no winter beyond an occasional light frost. The apricots are blooming when the pine-covered plateau at Grand Cañon is deep in snow.

The trail is a road now, a road that crosses and re-crosses

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the river and winds between blossoming orchards and fields of fragrant alfalfa to the agency at Supai village.

Supai, as an Indian agency, is of numbered days. Once a powerful and warlike tribe, the Havasupais now number less than 190 men, women, and children. Intermarriage, virtually forced upon them by their isolation, tuberculosis, venereal diseases, and epidemics of measles have accounted for the rest.

Ethnologically, they are of Yuman stock — a tiny twig on the great Uto-Aztecan family tree. Their nearest kindred are the Wallapai, on a reservation just southwest of them, and the Mojave, in the vicinity of Needles. They are basketmakers, although now they weave virtually nothing except flat plaques and shallow bowls that they sell at Grand Cañon. Occasionally, however, one can pick up the old, distinctive, conical burden-baskets of diagonal weave and the water-jars of basketry smeared with black piñon gum.

Their homes are "hogans" such as the Navajos build, although the Supai at times depart from the conventional circular shape and erect a structure rectangular in floor plan. Hogans, Supai or Navajo, circular or rectangular, are low, domed structures plastered with mud until they resemble giant anthills; windowless, and furnished with a small circular orifice in the middle of the roof through

Roads to Roam

which escapes a portion of the smoke from the fire that is always burning on the hard-packed floor. The balance of the smoke remains in eddying clouds within the dwelling, encouraging trachoma and producing chronic conjunctivitis among the inhabitants thereof.

The medicine-man is still supreme. All diseases are treated with incantation and the "sweat-house." The patient, naked, squats within a tiny shelter of logs plastered with mud; water is pour on heated stones until he is nearly parboiled by the rising steam; and he dashes forth to plunge in the cold river. In such ailments as measles the cure is far more fatal than the disease. The ceremonies over the sick lack the color of the more ritualistic Navajo "sings." There are no sand-paintings, no "yebichai" dances, and the songs are monotonous grunting chants.

And, too, the old fundamentalism is tottering. The insidious propaganda and agnosticism of modernist doctrines is striking at the morale of the cleric-physician. After "singing" all day over a sick person the medicine-man takes advantage of the friendly dark to slip to the back door of the agency and beg of Mrs. Hambly, wife of the agent and herself a graduate nurse, some of the "white man's medicine." Quinine, castor oil, and iodine are mighty and prevail.

The Land of the Sky Blue Waters

"Wantum firewater!" demanded one ancient insistently.

"You're crazy, Billy," Mrs. Hambly told him. You know I haven't any 'firewater' and that I wouldn't give it to you if I had!"

"Wantum firewater. You got!"

"No got!" The usually mild Mrs. Hambly was growing angry.

"You got! I show!"

He led her behind the agency building to the storehouse and pointed triumphantly to a five-gallon can of kerosene. He got his "firewater."

The little group of government buildings and Indian hogans that make up the village of Supai lie in an almost circular amphitheater a few hundred yards in diameter in the depths of the cañon. Sheer walls of red rock close it in on all sides, their sweeping contours masking the narrow gashes through which the trail and the noisy, rushing river find entrance and exit. Directly across from the agency a great cape of the crimson sandstone thrusts itself out from the walls of the cañon. It is scarcely a yard wide at its crest and the forces of erosion have gnawed steadily at it through the ages until two massive top-heavy buttes are all that remain of a one-time far greater height of the wall. Between them a tiny nubbin of rock

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stands to show the spot from which another eroded pinnacle fell crashing to the cañon bed. They are mighty monoliths, these two that remain. They dominate everything, towering over the valley like the twin spires of some protecting cathedral. And as the sun drops behind the cliffs to the west and the long shadows of the buttes crawl across the amphitheater, Mrs. Hambly tells me the story — the Supai story — of the two monoliths and the jutting spur between them.

I have used that story elsewhere, as most of you know. I cribbed it, as writing men do and have ever done, and adapted it to suit my own purposes, for Supai Village and the red-walled Havasu Cañon is the factual location of "The Cañon of Lost Waters."

Winifred Dixon heard — probably from William Bass — another version far more modern and jazzy than mine, but listen again to that yarn as I first heard it in the cool silence of Havasu.

It is a love story — a romance of the elder days when the Supais were a savage war-tribe and their brown maidens were comely and much desired by the young men of the tribes who lived beyond the confines of the hidden valley; brides desired and eagerly sought by the Wallapais, the Piutes, the roving, fierce-eyed Navajos, and the Apache.

The Land of the Sky Blue Waters

To Supai came a man of one of these "outside" tribes, a youth who loved and was loved by the daughter of a Supai chieftain. Despite a tribal law against marriage with a foreigner, despite the opposition of the gods that in those days took a very active interest in the affairs of men; the young people persisted and one night stole away together through the darkness. Her parents and the tribe slept, but the gods did not sleep and one deity — described only as "the little god" — followed the couple, determined to break up the alliance.

They ran to the south, and he dried up the river before them and closed in the cliffs into the narrow gorge of Cataract Cañon. Then they ran to the north, past the sleeping village, and he set in their path a great gulf into which the river thundered in a cataract of snowy foam. Frightened, they turned to the westward, climbing the cliffs that ringed the fertile valley. And in his anger at this last defiance the godlet turned them into stone as they clambered up the rock walls.

"And," Mrs. Hambly concludes, "he was so determined that they would never again have an opportunity to embrace each other that he turned himself into stone too and set himself between them! He's the little point of rock between the two big towers. The three of them have stood there ever since that night, the old people say

Roads to Roam

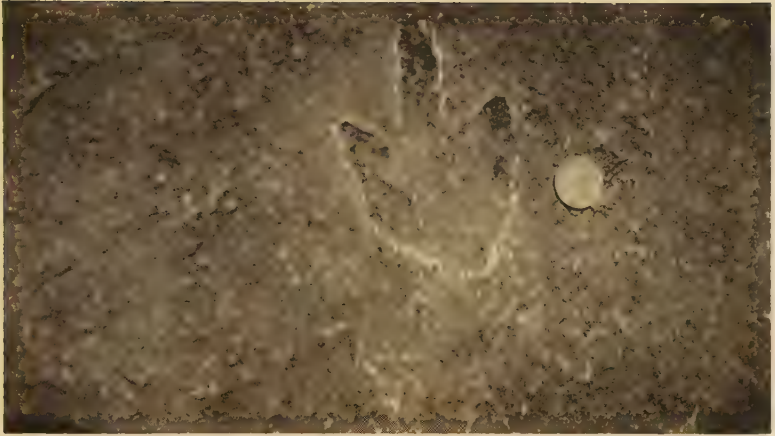
— the man from the outside, the chief's daughter, and the little revengeful god! ”

A rather amusing primitive legend, ingenious in its explanation of purely natural geologic formations — but in the depths of Havasu the whimsy disappears. This place is “in the earth” — far out of the world we have always known — and here all things are possible. Time is not. Civilization, its bustle, its striving, and its competition, is of another planet. Here is only silence, and beauty, and a perfect peace.

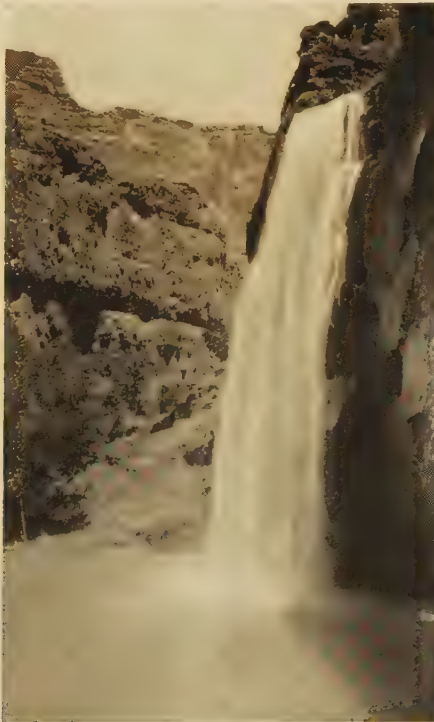
I walked along the road, away from the agency building. A mounted Indian passed me, the deep yellow dust spurting from beneath his pony's shuffling hoofs and hanging like a drop curtain of translucent golden gauze in the still air.

“Hannagay!” he exclaimed, smiling; and “Hannagay!” I responded — the one Supai word I knew. They are friendly folk, these dwellers in the Land of the Sky Blue Waters; smiling and happy in a life of poverty and squalor. One never encounters the sulky aloofness or the unveiled contempt of the Apache and the Navajo.

I sat on the steps of the disused schoolhouse and watched night fold its cloak over this hidden oasis. As the darkness deepened the girdling cliffs seemed to mount higher and higher into the sky. As they climbed they



DINOSAUR TRACK. WHITE DISC IS SIZE OF SILVER DOLLAR



THE SNOWY CURTAIN OF
HAVASU FALLS

The Land of the Sky Blue Waters

drew closer to each other, softly and silently massing their bulk about this spot that they protected. The big buttes — the lovers that had been turned to stone — were now but black velvet shadows against the purple velvet sky in which the big flaming stars of the desert were, one by one, appearing.

And into my soul there crept something of the peace of this place that is Havasu — its silence, and its complete removal from the world and mundane tribulations. It was as though I had stepped from a thronged city street into the calm hush of a cathedral. I saw Havasu through new-opened eyes; saw it as the place where Jep Starr, hard-bitten bronk-rider, would find his soul and his heart's desire. Jep Starr, Dolores Burton, and Navajo Dick of the seared heart were born that night below the loom of the tall buttes.

A dog barked in the Indian village and I heard the deep clicking gutturals of the Supai speech as a man and a barefooted woman walked toward their hogan. And then — like the distant drone of a mighty dynamo — the night-wind brought to my ears the roar of the waterfalls that I had ridden here to see. I rose and walked back through the still night to the agency and the comfortable room Mrs. Hambly had prepared for me.

I took no guide to lead me to the falls of Havasu Creek

Roads to Roam

the following morning. I was selfish. One can scarcely get lost in a cañon only a few hundred yards in width, and the opening and closing of a couple of barred gates are but minor annoyances. Therefore I dispensed with a guide and the necessity of considering anyone except myself.

Havasu Creek plunges to the level of the Colorado in three distinct steps. The first of these — Navajo Falls — is more properly a cascade, the blue waters racing in snowy foam down a 45-degree declivity in the rock ledges.

All about are curtain-like deposits of travertine, record of a time when the creek followed other courses and carried a vastly greater volume of water. I photograph, inspect, and follow the trail on through the arching alders and across a short but deep ford to the second drop — the Bridalveil Falls.

Prominent geographical features should have names, I admit. There must be tags by which we can identify rivers, cañons, mountains, and waterfalls: but here is a prayer for the display of some degree of originality in nomenclature! In the naming of the scenic beauties of America two things weary me beyond all others — “Bridalveil” as a name for a waterfall: “Old Baldy” for a mountain!

There are forty-eight states in the Union and I'll make

The Land of the Sky Blue Waters

Jay House's favorite wager of a week's salary against a Mexican dime that the bride's watery veil hangs in every one of them. And Old Baldy is scarcely less ubiquitous. I know of two of them in Arizona, one in California, three in Montana, and two in Colorado. They're as omnipresent, and by repetition as wearisome, as "Lover's Leaps!" Catering to this particular personal phobia, I decline to call the second falls of Havasu Creek by the title of Bridalveil. Let them be known by the name with which a few people are endeavoring to supplant the more common title, Havasu Falls.

One comes upon them with no warning other than that given by their deep, all-pervading thunder. The trail is cut through a jutting shoulder of the earth and rock walls that gather close about them and one emerges from this unroofed tunnel to a full view of the cataract.

Havasus Falls! A hundred feet of snowy mist dropping in slow stateliness over a rusty wall into a basin of turquoise! "Fine" writing, says you, but it fits. Water in a waterless land; sheer beauty in surroundings of savage grandeur; silence, except for the thunder of the falling waters; beauty and peace; peace and beauty. The spray curtains sway to and fro in the vagrant, eddying breezes, bathing now this wall, now that. The rocks about the foot of the cataract, the mist-splashed walls on either side,

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are green with deep, soft banks of maidenhair fern. White of falling water, blue of circular pool beneath, red-brown of guardian cliffs, green of maidenhair and moss, and yellow of tawny sands! Havasu Falls!

I would have been willing to spend the rest of the day there but the sightseeing complex, the urge to "do" the cañon in true American style, would not permit. I prowled for a time below the falls, stepping from rock to rock above blue waters under an arching canopy of alder, and then mounted and rode on to the third plunge of Havasu Creek — Mooney or, as some would have it, Wallapai Falls.

Let Mooney Falls stand as a name. Mooney was an old miner — the long iron ladder that led to his prospect still stands against the cliff below the falls — and he fell three hundred feet to his death there nearly forty years ago. They will tell you that the present trail to the foot of the falls was cut by his comrades for the purpose of recovering his body. It required a year, they say, to cut that path that is half trail and half a winding stepladder tunnelled through the cliff face, and when they finally reached Mooney (here enters Legend!) his body was perfectly preserved by the chemical action of the travertine-laden spray that had fallen upon it for twelve months! Let Mooney Falls remain its name.



MOONEY FALLS



TRAVERTINE CURTAINS

The Land of the Sky Blue Waters

Those who revel in statistics are welcome to the information that the waters take a drop of 196 feet from the jutting rock against which the stream divides to the deep, circular, blue pool beneath. The walls of the cañon tower twice that height — and more! — above, a mighty parapet of crimson and brown and ocher that seems, with that curious lack of perspective so typical of Arizona, to have no depth whatever. The line of the crest is as sharp as though drawn with a ruler against the sky, giving the cliffs but two dimensions, height and width. They are mammoth “flats” thrust out from the wings of a gigantic theater to set the stage of a Maxfield Parrish painting.

Everywhere are evidences of the mighty volume of water that at one time coursed down this cañon. Drooping curtains of travertine are all about the falls, at times hiding them from view as one clammers — holding by tooth and toenail — down the Mooney trail.

It's quite a climb, but perfectly safe unless one slips or yields to dizziness, relaxes a grip, and falls. In part it follows ledges and narrow shoulders of the rock but where these are not available the builders cut boldly into the actual face of the cliff with the drifts, stopes, and winzes they used in their mining operations. Some of the vertical descents are supplied with ladders, others with notched poles, and others with hand- and foot-holds fur-

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nished by heavy bolts driven deep into the rock. The boulders at the foot of the cliff are deeply hidden by banks of fern — luxurious divans on which to relax after the effort of the descent.

I followed the course of the brawling river around an island — it was here that Mooney's body lay during the year of trail building — and found a bathtub that the gods of the cañon must have designed for their own use. It was a basin — ten feet long, four wide, and four deep — scooped by the river in a soft ledge of sandstone and filled to the brim with the blue water of Havasu.

It was — and I'm cribbing again — the bath of baths, before which Susannah's, Marat's, Anna Held's, Montezuma's, Hadrian's, Messalina's, Diana's, and other famous ablutions faded to mere sketchy dabblings at the village pump.

Impiously I invaded it. I remembered the experience of the feminine adventurers of "Westward Hoboes" and — emulating them — tried the sun-warmed bathing place. The bathing suit was one I have carried for some years, always satisfactory and fitting faultlessly. And if Winifred Hawkrige Dixon claims to be the nymph of Havasu, I'm hereby filing my lien upon the title of triton of those sky blue waters.

CHAPTER V

*LA PUEBLA DE LA NUESTRA SEÑORA
LA REINA DE LOS ANGELES*



CHAPTER V

Nuestra Señora De Los Angeles

(A chapter which, being unillustrated and correspondingly uninteresting, may be skipped.)

NO matter how you plan, how devoutly you study road maps, how carefully you figure time-schedules, any automobile trip in summer from Grand Cañon to the Pacific Coast is, to say the least, decidedly uncomfortable. There are only two routes — one by way of Phoenix, Gila Bend, and Yuma to San Diego; the other through Needles and Barstow to Los Angeles.

There is a third route, if you want desert and poor roads as an alternative to desert and fair highways. From Wickenburg one can strike straight across the Harque Hala desert through Aguila and Salome, cross the Colo-

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rado on the toll bridge at Ehrenburg, and cut in on the Los Angeles — Yuma highway just north of the Salton Sea. The two first mentioned, however, are the only ones generally travelled.

On either course you pass through the hottest areas of the U. S. A., the one through Yuma and the steaming humidity of the Imperial Valley; the other via Needles and the blast furnace that is marked on the maps as the Mojave Desert. Yuma and Needles quarrel for the questionable distinction of being the hottest town in America. I believe that the trophy — a hand-embroidered antique copper warming pan — has been awarded to Yuma. Government records show a slightly higher average daily temperature in the more southern city. Any attempt at comparison would be decidedly invidious. Either village represents to its permanent inhabitants and presents to the transient visitor the utter depths of physical discomfort.

Virtually all travel across the desert is at night — safe enough, for there's little tricky road on either route. My own suggestion would be to leave Grand Cañon in the late afternoon, enjoy a leisurely dinner at the Fred Harvey hotel in Ash Fork, and then push on to Needles for a midnight lunch. By early morning the hot sands of the Mojave have cooled and one is out of the desert and climbing

Nuestra Señora De Los Angeles

from Barstow toward Victorville before the sun begins to make his power felt.

It's just a little short of 600 miles from Grand Cañon to Los Angeles by way of Needles and the Mojave. A long, tough drill under the best of conditions, but one might as well slog straight through. One could stop at Victorville, but when you get there it's only another hundred miles or so in to L. A.

I had intended to go to San Diego, driving to Phoenix and then making a dash across the desert, but, being human, changed my mind between Williams and the junction at Ash Fork and pushed on through to Needles. It's 289 miles from Grand Cañon to Needles — good road but a rather uninteresting ride except for the few hours' drive between Kingman and Oatman and on to the Colorado River bridge. Here the highway loops through a range of volcanic mountains — naked, rough to the last degree, and most spectacular. Oatman is a little mining hamlet tucked away in a gorge of the hills. You dive into it, in second gear, from the crests to the north and east, follow a main street into which the jagged peaks are striving to push the houses, and then climb out to a view across miles of blistering desert to the muddy Colorado.

Once across the bridge at Topock and one is in California. Good road ceases at the boundary. The Golden

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State reserves her concrete highways for her more western sections, although she has promised that 1931 will see a hard surfaced road all the way to Needles. There are plenty of signs, however, to advise the tourist that he is now in California and that speed must be reduced to fifteen miles an hour on all curves and at all intersections. Pause for speculation as to whether anyone ever heeds those injunctions.

Needles is hot — a terrible, steamy, humid heat that beats on the eyeballs and hammers like a club at the base of the brain. I selected the hottest spot possible, five miles south of the town, to acquire my first puncture of the trip. Sweat and profanity mounted one of the spares.

There's a Fred Harvey hotel in Needles and — *gloria in excelsis Deo* and peace to Fred's ashes — it's refrigerated. It stands right over the Santa Fé tracks, like all railroad hotels, and mangy looking Mojave Indians, most of them fat squaws, squat in the shade along the walls and come to life with the arrival of a train. Then they pad up and down the platforms on large bare feet and sell horrible souvenirs to tenderfeet who send them home with the thrilling notation that they were purchased from a real, honest-to-God aborigine. Bows and arrows of mesquite, painted in red, blue, and yellow, and bead necklaces are the principal articles of commerce. Better beads could be

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obtained from any Woolworth store for a tenth the cost — but, of course, the atmosphere would be lacking.

I got dinner and a room, leaving a call for three:thirty. To paraphrase Ernest Crosby: “I searched for sleep, but sleep eluded me.” Too late did I discover that there was a hole in the screen. The Colorado River mosquitoes had found the hole first and while one stood outside and rang the dinner bell his little playmates piled through and held high revel on my unclad carcass. The enjoyment of the banquet was wholly one-sided, and only Scotch perversity — the realization that I’d already paid for that room — prevented me from dressing and moving on through the night.

It was daylight at four when I pulled out, and even a sleepless night couldn’t down a grin of appreciation of the ironic humor of a sign by the roadside on the outskirts of Needles. “City Limits, Los Angeles,” it said. “Speed, 20 miles per hour.” Rather an appropriate wisecrack directed at a municipality that is taking in so much territory.

There’s a wild, forlorn, savage beauty about the Mojave. It has none of the charm or color of our southern Arizona deserts. One senses only its unfriendliness, its grim desire to be let alone to continue as it has always been. Every horizon is bounded by dry, brittle-looking

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mountains — those more remote hovering like silver-tawny soap bubbles in the flickering heat-waves. The road is rutty and most ungodly dusty; there is no vegetation save saltweed and stunted, widely-scattered greasewood, and the monotony of leagues of gray sand is broken only by the dead black areas of cruel, knife-edged, volcanic malapais.

A lovely, cheerful region! Good place to take a bride on a honeymoon. If love could survive two weeks in the heart of the Mojave it would never fade. I was glad when I struck the pavement at Daggett. The California Department of Agriculture has a station there. All tourists are stopped and Sam-Browned, pistol-draped inspectors go through their luggage for pink boll-weevil or purple galloping dandruff or some other savage denizen of the Arizona wilds. The only thing they don't make you open is your fountain pen. I was tickled to death when my bedroll, tucked under the rear deck, escaped their notice. All the thrill of riding free on a street car! The inspection is, I am told, a typically Californian vengeance for a similar quarantine maintained by the state of Arizona. Arizona has only one come-back. When they catch a traveler from California they make him open his fountain pen!

Most of the inspectors, however, are pretty good scouts and make due allowances for the fact that one's temper

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is apt to be somewhat testy after an all night drive. I had breakfast with a couple of them in a roadside restaurant — one of the few remaining places where the price of a meal is fifty cents and the stuff is put on the table and you're told to hoe in. I took just a snack — cantaloupe, cornflakes, scrambled eggs, bacon, waffles with syrup, and a couple of cups of coffee — a mere pick-me-up. And when, in generous mood, I left all of a dime under the edge of my plate, the waitress ran after me to return it! Laugh that off, you victims of hat-check bandits! There are actually regions so primitive, so lacking in the refinements of civilization, that they have not yet heard of the tip!

Concrete road all the way from Daggett to Los Angeles. You leave the desert behind at Victorville and climb Cajon Pass and drop into the San Bernardino Valley. It's a beautiful mountain country. Some of the peaks to the south tower more than 12,000 feet above the floor of the valley. The yucca was in bloom everywhere — slender spires of creamy flowers against a background of dark green hills.

On to Los Angeles through miles of orange groves along a road bordered by tall eucalypti set so closely as almost to form a hedge. Why the popularity of the eucalyptus throughout California is difficult to understand. I was told it was originally introduced as a wind-break of very

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rapid growth, but apparently it has come to be used extensively for purely decorative purposes. Personally I can see nothing attractive in its leprous bark, its ungainly outline, or the shabby looking leaves that it sheds in such abundance at all seasons. It has neither the grace nor the dignity of the Lombardy poplar.

Advertising signs, roadside hot-dog and fruit stands, and dizzy-looking lunch rooms increase inversely with the lessening distance from the City of Our Lady, the Queen of the Angels. Los Angeles has only herself to thank for the stigmata of cheapness and tawdriness so frequently laid upon her.

Cheap "staff" statues to advertise various brands of gasoline, soft drinks, or lunch rooms. Extravagantly ornamental pylons to mark the entrance to suburban developments where as yet there is no building and the road — conspicuously labelled "Mimosa Boulevard" or some such highfalutin' name — ceases a dozen feet beyond the pylons. Chamber-of-Commerce advertising signs of a host of small towns, each sign interesting only for new superlatives and a candid striving to out-ballyhoo the press agent of the neighboring community. Road signs such as one sees approaching Pasadena that bore the legend, with appropriately-indicating arrows: "London 6387 miles. New York 3324 miles. Los Angeles 14 miles."

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Such hopeless punjab is, in its aggregate, productive only of the raucous and impolite rawsberry.

I piled into the Holy City, Capital of the Lands of Promise, Mecca of every toil-scarred agriculturist of the Middle West, Sodom and Gomorrah and then some in the eyes of the wowsers of the Bible Belt, about 1:30; got a room at the Clark, soaked for a luxurious, sybaritic thirty minutes in a scalding bath, and at three in the afternoon lay down for a nap. Fifteen hours later — fifteen hours of utter unconsciousness — I turned over and decided I was in better shape to look over the town.

Man — and what annoying creatures human beings can be — has done his best to spoil Los Angeles. Advertising of the Babbitt-Rotary-Lions-George Creel-Chamber of Commerce and the hit-'em-between-the-eyes-with-a-two-by-four school has played hell with a natural charm and a beautiful location. Only if you look far beyond the handiwork of *homo* more-or-less *sapiens* can you find anything of beauty in Los Angeles.

In its floral loveliness alone there is a certain redemption from other sins of which it may be guilty. Tiny frame cottages costing only a couple of hundred dollars are framed in bowers of garlands. Geraniums grow into trees, roses have the lavish profusion of daisies in Pennsylvania, the gorgeous orange poppies of California blaze

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like fires in every lawn; there is hibiscus, moon-flower, clematis, and tall, flaming poinsettia trees; smoky tamarisk, oleander, vines — I never learned their name — so heavy with blue flowers that they are like an amethyst cloak flung over porch trellises, arbors, and pergolas; and everywhere the crimson and gold and pink of gladiolus.

I admit it's a man-made beauty. Those flowers, in such profusion, were not native growths. But that does not make it a bit less gorgeous. You can forget the atrocious effigy of a racing car and goggled driver, advertising some super-powered motor-fuel, when by its concrete base stands a bewitching barefooted maiden of some nine Iowa winters plus three California summers who offers you a great armful of pure color — tall spears of flame-hued gladioli — for twenty-five cents!

It's an overgrown hick town. So's New York. It developed (though it did not produce) such creatures as Aimee Semple McPherson, Annie Besant, and lesser leaders, swamis, cult heads, snake doctors, Holy Rollers, and religious nuts in general beyond human capacity to number or understand. Every religion, freakish or orthodox, that the world ever knew is flourishing today in Los Angeles. One can worship — if one is the worshipping kind — according to the creed, doctrine, tenets, dogmas, or isms of Christianity in all its more orthodox interpre-

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tations, Mormonism, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, New Thought, Christian Science, Theosophy, Zoroastrianism, Seventh Day Adventism, Rosecrucian Mysticism, Unity Centers, Jewry, and some scores of lesser sects that cling with varying degrees of fidelity to the garments of Oriental mysticism, Chinese, Persian, Yogi philosophy; the efficacy of the mantra, the attainment of a blessed Nirvana, the infinity of things infinitesimal, blah, hokum, hooey, punjab, what have you, or what do you want. And if in this galaxy of theology the visitor's spiritual hunger is still unsatisfied there is an active chapter of the A.A.A.A. — the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism.

One afternoon I drove out to the east and south, driving casually with no particular destination in mind, taking every third road to the left, then every second to the right through a multitude of little suburbs that Los Angeles has taken to its angelic bosom. In one of them — nameless for the good and sufficient reason that I never bothered to learn the name — a camp-meeting was in progress.

The penitent seemed to be “coming through” in good form. The shouts of the exhorting evangelist — interrupted by “Amens” and “Hallelujahs” and less articulate fervencies — were audible on the road. I parked my car and, warily vigilant for proselyters, approached the

Roads to Roam

tent. A woman in an absolute ecstasy of religious fervor came dancing and shouting from the lighted interior. Her eyes were glassy. She saw me no more than she did the trees that her sub-consciousness aided her to avoid.

“Praise God!” she screamed — and the “a” of that “praise” was a long-drawn shriek of exultation — “Praise His Name! I’ve found Him again; I’ve found Him again! Same old Jesus we had in Taixas! Same old Jesus we had in Taixas! ! !”

Yes, kind sir and gentle lady, in a multitude of ways Los Angeles is a nut town, but the fact remains there’s a heap of beauty there — wonderful hills and cañons, distant vistas of the Pacific, the walnut groves of the San Fernando Valley, and homes exquisitely designed to fit in with their surroundings. Of course, there are a plenty of houses in execrable taste — but you’ll find that in Bryn Mawr, Devon, Dedham and the Newtons, the North Shore and Westchester County, Roland Park and the Green Spring Valley.

The one big thing that impressed me about the town was its newness and the utter lack of a real metropolitan atmosphere. It is a sixteen-year-old boy who suddenly finds himself six feet tall. He fancies himself a man, serenely oblivious of the fact that his clothes no longer fit him and that his hands and wrists protrude grotesquely

Nuestra Señora De Los Angeles

from his short sleeves. Maturity, and the poise that comes with maturity, is utterly lacking.

Los Angeles is so new that it squeaks when it walks. Save for such minor details as the number and location of windows and doors every white house with a red-tiled roof is like every other white house with a red-tiled roof. Its civic pride is the shrill yelping jealousy of the small boy whose big brother can lick any other kid in the block. Its hurry and scurry and bustle is the whoopee spirit of the county seat during Fair Week. Dignity, poise, breeding, tradition; it has not nor can it understand.

Ten days later I was to be in San Francisco and as I crossed the bay and looked at that town, serene and inspiring on its hills, Los Angeles dwindled to the status of just another town I'd passed through in my roving. Nor had the first impression of San Francisco altered when I left it. If Los Angeles were transported to the banks of the Mississippi it would become middle-western overnight, but San Francisco would be San Francisco in the Sahara. Those who live there can say, with the pride that was Paul's, "I am a citizen of no mean city."

But this is a tale of the far places, not of towns. Let us get away from the City of the Angels and ho, for the open road and the dim trails.

CHAPTER VI

THE BIG TREES



CHAPTER VI

The Big Trees

IF "the woods were God's first temples," the Big Trees of California are certainly His cathedrals. One's first redwood brings with it an indescribable thrill. I'd been driving for the best part of thirty miles through timber — big timber too! There were plenty of pines that measured three or four feet through the butt, and that is good big timber in any man's country. Then, without warning, I saw a *tree!* A *sequoia gigantea*. It stood almost beside the road, a tremendous red-brown column streaked with the vivid green of a parasitic moss that grows on all the redwoods. I was to see bigger ones before I left the Mariposa Grove, but this was my first. I

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stopped, rested my head on the back of the seat that I might take it in its entirety, and marvelled. It was about eight or ten feet through the butt — and beside it the pines dwindled to quaking aspens!

Should anyone ask me to describe the foliage of the Big Trees I'd be utterly unable to comply. I have a hazy impression that their leaves or needles or whatever you call 'em are fronded, something like a juniper; and I remember that their cones are very small — about the size of my fingertip — but beyond that I'm lost. The branches and the foliage are so far above one's head that one never gives them a thought.

I had left San Luis Obispo that morning. The California roads, from Los Angeles to the Yosemite, are splendid. Almost too good. There's a monotony about a ribbon of glass-smooth concrete that unrolls in apparent perpetuity ahead of your radiator and makes forty and fifty miles an hour seem like the pace of a dilatory window-shopper.

Two routes are available from the southern metropolis (L. A. likes to be called that; it sounds so grown up and sophisticated.) In summer the so-called coast route, though longer, is advisable. For a few miles between Ventura and Santa Barbara, the highway really follows the curving shore-line of the blue Pacific. Man has

The Big Trees

made the ocean hideous as you approach the mission city. Oil was found there and tall derricks, inexpressibly ugly, stalk on spidery legs into the very surf and the reek of crude oil is all pervading.

By the coast route one gets glimpses of some of the show-towns of California; Santa Barbara with its wonderful homes and gardens, and of the old missions that the padres established, a day's journey apart, along the Camino Real. San Fernando, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, and San Juan Bautista. There's music and romance in the very names. Visions of quiet, shaded cloisters; of golden crosses and brilliant vestments gleaming through the dusky interior of chapels; the sound of clicking rosaries and the soft shuffle of sandalled feet.

The missions themselves, however, are vaguely disappointing. They haven't the beauty of tower and dome of old San Xavier del Bac at Tucson, and their natural 'dobe color is far less striking than Xavier's spotless white. Then, too, these California missions are too much visited, too commercialized — and they look too new. Santa Barbara, we learn, is to all intents and purposes a modern building. It was left a heap of 'dobe bricks by the great earthquake of 1906. San Juan Bautista is rather shabby, but one forgets all that in the enthusiastic love for the old building displayed by the Mexican boy who guides you

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through. The thought of him brings up another recollection — that of the gowned and sandalled priest who answered my pull at the bell-cord at Santa Barbara. A young man, alert, strong, lean as a race-horse, with the quick, incisive speech we associate usually with heads of important departments or executives. Cassock and sandals and tonsured pate seemed as anachronistic on him as they would on Charles M. Schwab or Hubert Work. I couldn't help wondering as to what burden his youthful strength had proved unequal and whether that load was really lightened by sharing it with Mother Church.

One slides into San Juan Bautista from Paso Robles over the famous San Juan Grade — really not much of a hill — and then on as straight as the well-known arrow for miles across the hot marsh-lands of the San Joaquin Valley. Fifty, fifty-five, sixty, sixty-five m. p. h. The speed of your own going creates for you a pseudo-coolness. Highway markers told me that I was Yosemite-bound, although it was difficult to visualize mountains as being anywhere near this flat, steaming region.

Beyond Merced is Del Monte — “ the largest peach and apricot orchards in the world,” as a huge sign arrogantly proclaims. Knowing nothing of peach or apricot orchards I accept the sign at its face value. Great must be America's consumption of Del Monte fruit. The orchards



“ . . . THE BIG TREES ARE GOD'S CATHEDRALS ”

The Big Trees

— mile after mile of trees placed with mathematical precision — lie on either side of the highway. I stop and, peering down between the rows of trunks, endeavor to see the limits of the orchard. Impossible. The narrow alley dwindles to a point and the point is lost in an infinity of green leaves and grayish trunks. One never sees old trees in any of the California orchards. Perhaps they have not had time to acquire age; perhaps the ageing ones are cut out as the quality of their fruit deteriorates. These trees are all young, strong, and intensely efficient. There's none of the "sweet hush of growing things" in California's call of the soil. No pigs nor cattle wander through tall grass beneath gnarled, friendly old trees and get fat and sassy on fallen fruit.

Cans must be filled, millions of gleaming cans with labels of red and green; and the atmosphere is one of efficiency plus. The orchards are as clean and well-swept as a hotel ballroom. Only God can make a tree, and only California can make that tree yield double or treble its Creator's intent. Christopher Morley, lover of peace and archbishop of the cathedral of indolence, would commit suicide in Del Monte.

All things have an end, however, and I finally reach the limits of the orchards and, a few miles further, enter the foothills. A sign informs me that it's twenty-eight miles

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to the Mariposa Big Tree Grove. I take the side road to which the arrow points. Twenty-eight miles of rutty, dusty mountain driving, with an abundance of S curves before you reach the redwoods. Now and again I cross little mountain streams, clear and icy-cold, chattering merrily along over mossy stones and under arching green branches; happy little brooks, cheerfully ignorant of the fate that awaits them in the hot marshlands. It's almost dark when I pull in to the cabins and clamor, none too successfully, for food.

The lodge, restaurant, camp, or whatever one wishes to call it, is built in the heart of the grove. A campfire blazed in a clearing and there were seats there — hollowed sections of redwood logs — where one could relax, forget a long day's drive, stare into the embers, and watch a silvery second-quarter moon rise above the forest. I was told that when the camp had been built, some seven years earlier, the Forest Service had granted permission to cut up one fallen tree for firewood. They're still working on that one tree. After seven years' use about a third of the great conifer has been consumed!

In the morning I followed the road to the summit of the hill on which the grove stands, pausing now and then to gaze out between the massive brown trunks across immeasurable valleys. I trust I murmured, in best towerist

The Big Trees

fashion, the properly-modulated ohs and ahs as I found myself and my car passing directly through a still-growing tree that had been tunnelled, precisely as a mountain is tunnelled, to permit the passage of the road. Many travelers will recall Mariposa Grove by the hole through the tree, just as the man found the owl the most impressive feature of Casa Grande, but to me it seemed rather tragic to take a chance on killing a magnificent redwood just to give some casual traveler a thrill.

Just as an aside, there's one dead tree — fallen a couple of centuries ago, perhaps — that would make most of those now standing look like jackstraws. They've given it a name, of course, — The Fallen Monarch — but no tin sign can add or detract one iota from that dead tree's regality. Even in death, it is the emperor of the vegetable kingdom.

I'm glad that I saw the Big Trees only at the two ends of a day: at dusk and in the early morning. At those times the sun's rays fall obliquely on the forest and the light slants in long streamers of luminance between the stately, columnar trunks. Under the more revealing, less merciful noonday sun, the grove would lose, I am sure, something of its solemn, cathedral silence. It would be hot then. One would be conscious of dust, and of the fact that the breeze was lost before it reached the ground.

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Too, one would realize that the upper portion of virtually every redwood is unsightly, splintered, and blasted. So tall are they that they are splendid targets for the lightning of the Sierra storms, and all of them have been struck again and again.

At dawn and dusk one is unconscious of this mutilation. One stands with reverence before the most ancient of living things. There are trees growing today on these western slopes of the High Sierras that were already Big Trees when Commodus was driving a chariot in the Circus Maximus, and they are standing, dignified, stately, and beautiful, today.

I left them before that impression faded.

CHAPTER VII

YOSEMITE



CHAPTER VII

Yosemite

MAY the Red Gods — to whom he has dedicated his life — forever smile kindly upon that forest ranger who turned me from the direct road into Yosemite Valley and sent me to Glacier Point!

“Yes, it’s seventeen miles,” he said in response to my questionings. “Road’s pretty steep and pretty rough. Yes, you’ve got to come back this same way.”

“But — ” he added quietly — “it’s just about the finest view there is in the Park! ”

I went. He had exaggerated neither steepness nor roughness of the road. It was both — and as full of crooks as a councilman’s conscience. For the first time in

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her twenty-five thousand miles of loyal service "Betsy" boiled. No car has any difficulty boiling in a long pull in low gear at an altitude of better than eight thousand feet. Incidentally, boiling doesn't hurt them much. One loses surprisingly little water.

There had been little rain and it was dusty, chokingly so, when three or four of us got piled up behind some particularly timid soul — a "fearsome man," like Kim's Babu, who crawled timorously along and refused to give passing room to those who pressed upon his rear.

Up and over timbered ridges, down into the shallow valleys between. Mountain meadows deep in lush grass and brilliant with lupin and wild rose and "Indian paint-brush." Iris, too. Little streams, fed by snowbanks above and as clear as crystal, racing along between mossy banks.

The road pitches down an abrupt slope, the trees thin out, and you are conscious of a mighty void. It's a hair-pin turn around that point — and a couple of thousand feet in which to reproach yourself for not having your brakes adjusted before you started the trip. There is nothing of the terraced effect of Grand Cañon. The Yosemite wastes no time in such delays to descent. It simply goes DOWN!

"Of course if I hadn't gone there," I wrote in my field notes that night, "I'd never have known what I missed.

Yosemite

A marvelous panorama of the snow-covered High Sierras — peak after peak towering more than 12,000 feet into the blue — the great naked mass of the Half Dome, and the silvery threads of the two waterfalls of the Merced River. Below, the valley itself is spread out like a child's garden beneath a Christmas tree. The drop from the point (7,700 ft.) to the valley (4,000 ft.) is almost sheer.

“Lord, what a ripping and splitting there must have been when the glaciers cut loose and made all this! I don't know what a geologist's opinion would be, but it seems to me that Half Dome, El Capitan, Cathedral Rocks, and the other cliffs cannot have been formed by any slow erosive processes. The angles — in a hard close-grained granite — are far too sharp. It must have happened fast — and I'm just as glad I wasn't around.

“There's only one view I've ever seen that can stand beside Glacier Point in the Yosemite. That's the Grand Cañon from Lipan Point, and the two are so different that they cannot be compared one with the other.”

A camera is a most unsatisfactory contrivance. It does its best, but its best is so far short of the actuality that the result is pathetic. One tries to reduce a fifty-mile panorama to a postcard. Can't be done. But so far as pictures can tell the story here's the view from Glacier Point. Like the Grand Cañon, it's far beyond any of

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the futile words of description that man, through his ages of articulation, has invented.

There was a man up at Glacier Point — one of those know-it-all *hombres* that would compare Milan Cathedral with the First Baptist Church in Oshkosh. He kept telling all who were within hearing that this “wasn’t so much of a drop!” Mount Whitney, he asserted, rose on the western side of Death Valley and the drop from the peak of the mountain, 20,000 feet, to the valley, some 300 feet below sea-level, was absolutely vertical! It was a good story — aside from such little details as that Mount Whitney is 14,502 feet high and is nearly a hundred miles away from Death Valley with the Panamint Mountains and sundry lesser ranges in between! The bird had probably heard of Telescope Peak on the western side of Death Valley. It’s no twenty thousand feet by a long, long shot, but it is said to present the highest vertical profile to be found in America.

Yosemite Valley — I drove down there after an excellent and surprisingly moderately priced lunch at Glacier Inn — is the most populous national park in America. Perhaps more people visit the Yellowstone, but there is infinitely more room there for the distribution of what that old ass Alfred Aloysius Horn called *homo stultus*. The pocket-like cañon of the Yosemite



HALF DOME



EL CAPITAN AND YOSEMITE VALLEY

Yosemite

comprises only a few square miles, and it's packed almost to the saturation point with towerists. Surrounded by the silent majesty of the eternal peaks the valley has the cathedral hush of a boilershop and the restfulness of 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue. Officers direct traffic at every road intersection. Motor horns blare and squawk and shriek. Foot travelers dodge frantically between the swiftly moving vehicles. Cars are parked solidly for blocks about the hotel and Camp Curry. There's every kind of motor-propelled contrivance from 1916 Fords to Rolls-Royces and Isottas, and every last one of them seems to be in a tearing hurry to go some place.

Just as Fred Harvey exercises a benevolent despotism at Grand Cañon, an outfit known as the Yosemite Park-Curry Company has a tail-hold on everything worth while in Yosemite. You find there none of the quiet, effortless efficiency of El Tovar, however. The Curry Company is to Fred Harvey (and Victor Patrosso) as Child's or the Automat is to the Art Club or the Ritz-Carlton. This is not semi-Spanish, *dolce far niente* Arizona. This is California, land of promise and of speed. Everybody is going somewhere and they're in one hell of a rush to arrive at their destination. One whose philosophy is that of indolent deliberation in all things wearies of it with surprising swiftness. Even Mirror Lake — an emer-

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ald of surpassing clearness reflecting Half Dome and the other surrounding heights — loses much of its beauty and charm by reason of the crowds that press about its banks and picnic under its pines.

The thickly populated valley isn't the Park — don't think it is for a second. I didn't see more than about one-half of one percent of the true Yosemite, and have no license whatever to write of it. Some day, I hope, I will go there again, get horses and a couple of pack-mules, and follow the trails that lead into the High Sierras, the true Yosemite. I'll go back to Jack Main's Cañon, and be as far removed from towerists and their Fords as though I were in another planet!

I saw only the valley, but what little I saw was enough! Like the Virginian's towel, it was "too popular." I turned Betsy about and, being an apostle of deliberation, deliberately passed everything there was on the road between the park and Merced!

CHAPTER VIII

SIGHTSEEING AND SOCIOLOGY,



CHAPTER VIII

Sightseeing and Sociology

THE Kit Carson Trail is one better known to fishermen than to tourists. One leaves the Lincoln Highway a few miles east of Sacramento (I passed through California's capital at dusk and my sole impression of it is that it possesses the most spectacular moving-picture theater, the Alhambra, that I've ever seen) and angles south and east across the wide Sacramento Valley. Here, there, and everywhere one sees the lights of the great dredges that are working twenty-four hours a day turning and sifting the sands of the valley for gold that the Forty-niners missed.

I'm going to make only a fleeting reference to Sonoma

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County, California, where I spent a happy ten days with Don and Lucile Walker, my cousins and very well-beloved. Theirs is a lovely country — stately redwoods (the *sempervirens*, not the *gigantea*; slightly smaller but no less beautiful), peaceful orchards and vineyards, and the real “stern and rockbound coast” of the Pacific from Bodega Bay to the Gualala River.

In just one paragraph I must tell of the impression my cowboy hat made in Sebastopol and Santa Rosa; of fishing for cod and red snapper from the rocks in Timber Cove, of the “sea gardens” revealed in the rock pools by the receding tides and the glee with which I tickled sea-anemones and made them close up on my finger. It would be a story of happy days and peaceful evenings, of good wine and better company at little dinners in Petaluma, of trips to Geyser Peak and the Valley of the Moon, and of one of the very few perfect marriages that has ever come under my personal observation.

But I’m a restless soul. I turned my back on those happy surroundings, pointed Betsy’s winged radiator cap to the rising sun, and spent the night in Jackson, a little gold-mining town stuck down in a deep cañon in a foothill range of the Sierras. Virtually every male inhabitant I encountered was gloriously tight in a preliminary celebration of the Fourth of July, and some of them were still

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working at it the next morning. One hombre, still going strong at six A.M., made three attempts to get through the door into his room. He'd back across the hall and make a dive for it, but each time the doorway would dodge him and he'd ram the wall with a jar that shook the house. His third trial was successful and he passed from sight on a high lope, never stopping until he crashed in a flat spin on the bed. I laughed, went to breakfast, and left Jackson behind.

Then up and into the mountains. Pine-clad slopes follow pine-clad slopes. I skirt lakes — silver sheets that mirror the snowy peaks. The altimeter climbs to 8,400 feet before I drop down the eastern slope of Kit Carson Pass to Hope Valley, the northernmost of three wide valleys known as Faith, Hope, and Charity. Nearly all this country is a national forest and a game preserve. A half-dozen deer dart in front of the Chrysler and bound off into the timber. One is a doe with a tiny fawn, a rather belated arrival still wearing his white-spotted birthday suit.

Here and there the road winds around the head of steep-walled ravines, mountain gorges that widen out a few miles below into mighty cañons. To write of the succession of vistas would be but an endless repetition of phrases — snow-covered peaks, high above timberline;

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naked granite ridges, scarred and torn by ancient glaciers; pine-covered mountain-sides that fade away into the blue distance; brimming streams, icy cold and arched over by pale green alder, aspen, and other deciduous growths; mountain flowers — I wish I could identify half of them — in a bewildering and colorful profusion. Those things are what make the High Sierras. To write of them all would be monotony: to see them is an infinite and marvelous succession of pleasures.

I drove down the cañon of the north fork of the Carson River to the little town of Markleeville, county seat of Alpine County. It's the county seat for the good and sufficient reason that there's no other town — I don't think there's even another postoffice — in the county.

There are some ninety registered voters on the assessor's lists of Alpine County, and I was told that virtually every one of the ninety, certainly every male, has some sort of political job. And the only taxpayers in Alpine are the big water and power companies. Do the ninety sock 'em? Yes, Clarence, the ninety do sock 'em. And HOW! As the story was told to me, the companies can't move out because the water they must have is right there in the mountain lakes of Alpine. They've just got to take it on the chin and look like they enjoyed it. If the yarn is true, Alpine County is the one place I've

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ever seen where the usual situation is reversed and old John Common People has the public utilities on his hip.

Any good outfielder could throw a baseball from one side of Markleeville to the other. There are about a dozen houses there, some of the ninety voters living out in the hills on lonely ranches, but they're building a new granite courthouse and a high school building — products, I imagine, of the most recent increase in tax assessments.

Back to Hope Valley and on through a pass to the north that leads down to Lake Tahoe, known to everyone in America through the efficient press-agenting that California gives her scenic beauties. Lake Tahoe is beautiful, though, and the little land-locked harbor on the western side, known as Emerald Bay, is a gem. I was there on July 4th and it was terribly crowded. Construction work was under way on all the roads, one rough detour followed another, and I drove from Tahoe down the Truckee River to Truckee through a dust-cloud as heavy as the smoke-screen laid down by a destroyer.

One picks up the Lincoln Highway just east of Emigrant Gap and Donner Lake, scene of one of the grimmest tragedies in American history, where the members of the Donner party — bound for the California goldfields — were snowbound and starved to death.

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Truckee is the first town you hit on the Lincoln Highway. Then comes a long coast over an excellent road around the foot of Peavine Mountain and then a dash of a dozen miles over concrete into Reno, Nevada.

I gave Los Angeles a chapter all to itself. Reno should have two! It's the wildest, dizziest, widest-open town in North America and it doesn't care who knows it! The ministers of the Bible Belt, the clerical wowsers of America, who look upon Los Angeles as the fountain-head of all sin, had better direct some portion of their attention to the metropolis of Nevada. Not that it'll do 'em any good. Reno is perfectly satisfied with herself as she is, and it would take a better man than John Roach Straton or "Dr." William A. Sunday to change her. Compared to Reno, Los Angeles looks like Ocean Grove, N. J., and Tia Juana, on a race day, like a Christian Endeavor convention. Boy howdy, what a town she is!

Gambling is licensed by the state. Virtually every cigar-store runs, as a side attraction, a \$5 change-in table-stakes poker game. In addition to these there are the regular "clubs" — a couple of dozen of 'em — where you can get any sort of action you crave. Faro, craps, blackjack, poker, roulette, chuck-a-luck — any or all of 'em, and the house will fade any bet you care to make. I watched a Chinaman win \$400 at faro and twenty-one

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and, to even things up, an American drop some \$1600 on the crap table at "The Willows."

That wide-open gambling exists in Nevada is due to a scrap between Reno and the other towns of the state. Reno is the divorce capital of America. Marital bonds are severed there with a speed that is staggering. Hundreds of people come there every year for what has come to be called the Cure. They get a house in town or rooms at the Riverside Hotel and while they're establishing the necessary three-months residence, they sally to and fro and make whoopee. There's big money in it for all the various interests of the town — and they know it. But some of the big birds got together and decided that gambling was altogether too wild-western and should be tamed. They stuck a bill in the Legislature forbidding gaming of any kind. This drew fervid protests from the other towns, particularly the moribund mining towns of Tonapah and Goldfield. They felt that they'd die entirely except for the attraction presented by green baize tables and the goddess of chance. They knew Reno's vulnerable spot and their solons introduced a bill providing a residence of six months to establish citizenship.

Well — Reno knew where her bread and butter was to be found. She promptly capitulated, both bills died in committee, and now the prospective grass widows and

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widowers can roll the bones or watch the little ball roll until the rising sun tints the Sierras.

Booze, did you say? The funniest story known in Reno is that back in 1919 some peculiar law known as the National Prohibition Act went into effect. You can get a drink anywhere in the town, and the procuring thereof is about as difficult as the purchase of a package of cigarettes or a Coca-Cola and requires a similar identification! Good licker, too! Don't ask me where they get it, but it's not this rot-gut moon or grain alcohol flavored with caramel. The quality is equal to that of the liquor dispensed over the bars in Old Mexico and the price is no higher. The beer is not so good — bottled stuff that tastes too much like home-brew to be attractive — but I had one or two gin-fizzes and some other prescriptions that really tasted like ten years ago. Nevada has no state prohibition law and they tell me that Federal enforcement officers are calmly escorted out of town and told to stay out, that Nevada can keep her own house in order and proposes to continue doing so without interference or suggestion from Washington.

An old conscience is employed in dealing with an ancient evil. Reno (and all other Nevada towns) still sticks to the old "crib" system in her Tenderloin. There's a dance-hall, a restaurant, a bar, and some forty



SILVER LAKES AND SNOW-CRESTS IN THE HIGH SIERRAS

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or fifty two-room cribs enclosed by a high board fence several blocks east of the business center. Several score more-or-less faded *femmes de joie* practice the most ancient and the most pathetic of professions behind the wooden barrier and two police officers are on duty there all the time.

I was interested, and sought the Health and Police Departments at City Hall for information. I was told that fights or other disturbances were of very rare occurrence, and that statistics showed a very low venereal infection rate for the city. The women are compelled to present themselves before a City physician for inspection every week.

Me, I'm neither reformer, dirt-disher, nor sociologist. Simply as a passing observation, the impression I received is that Reno's system is vastly superior to the clandestine, widely-dispersed vice of other cities I have visited. Prostitution is rigorously controlled and centered in a single district.

At least the Nevada system is honest, and the residential portions of the town are kept free of questionable resorts. Vice exists there, as it does in every American city, but one has to go and look for it. It does not thrust itself upon him.

Twenty-five or thirty miles south and east of Reno

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is the historic and picturesque old town of Virginia City, Nev., the "boom-town" of the mighty Comstock Lode, the greatest silver desposit the world has ever known.

The town got its name from the prank of a drunken miner in the early days of the camp. He fell down, the legend says, and in falling broke a bottle of whiskey he had in his hand. As he watched the liquor dripping on the ground he grinned owlshly.

"I christen thee 'Ole Virginny!'" he roared, and shattered the bottle against a rock. Virginia City it was from that time on.

I spent four days there, learning something about the town and the men who had torn their fortunes from those rocky hills. It was, for me, simply a scouting expedition. Some day I might go back there, really study the place and its history, and make a stab at a book on the days of the Big Bonanza.

While I was there I made a trip to Carson City, the drowsy little village that is the capitol of Nevada. There's little of the excitement that Reno serves in such large doses to its visitors. I got there about eight o'clock and had to do quite a little scouting before I could find a place to eat — which was the real reason for my visit, the single restaurant in Virginia City being horrible.

Nevada's state penitentiary is at Carson City, interest-

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ing because of the fact that there is the only lethal gas chamber in the world. Nevada has capital punishment, but she employs neither the electric chair nor the rope. Criminals sentenced to the extreme penalty are ushered into a room, fastened into a chair, and left alone. An instant later the executioner turns a valve and a jet of cyanic acid gas shoots into the chamber. Death, they say, is instant and painless and devoid of any of the horrors of slow strangulation or the "hot seat."

It's been employed only once since its installation. They had two men in the death house, one white and the other a Chinaman. The Oriental was used to satisfy any existent curiosity as to the efficacy of lethal gas as a mode of execution, and the governor then commuted the white man's sentence to life imprisonment.

Like every other gold and silver camp in the old West, Virginia is a dead city now. A few people still live there and talk of the days when Mark Twain was a newspaper man in the town and the Comstock Lode established the Fair and Mackey fortunes, but dozens of the vacant houses are falling to pieces and the entire eastern side of C Street, the main thoroughfare, is slowly dropping, board by rotting board, into the gulch along which the town is built. There are great gaps, twenty and thirty feet across, where the underpinning of the wooden side-

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walks has collapsed and the boards have fallen down the steep hillside. The only building in the town that has been kept up at all or, apparently, has been painted within the last decade, is the Roman Catholic Church. For some reason its name appealed to me as the most beautiful that could be given to a house of worship in such an environment — “St. Mary’s in the Mountains.”

Virginia City is built on the steep eastern slopes of Mt. Davidson and beneath the town, honeycombing the bare brown hills, are more than six hundred miles of workings, — shafts, tunnels, drifts, stopes, winzes, and all the other burrows that men dig when they’re tearing out mineral from the rocks. There too is the famous Sutro Tunnel, a five-mile bore, as straight as a gun-barrel, that was pierced through the hills for the sole purpose of transporting ores to the stamp mills and smelters that were built along the Carson River.

They’re working some of the mines now. Those of the citizens who still cling to Virginia City and her vanished glories expect great things of this new interest in the virtually exhausted workings.

“Come back here in another three months and you won’t know this town,” they assured me. “She’ll be boomin’ again!”

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As a matter of sober truth, however, all that is happening is that a consolidation of several companies is gambling a little on an effort to make very low-grade ores pay. They are working some thirty men, not mining, but prospecting. When I was there they were sinking a winze a couple of hundred feet in search of a richer ore body that, for some occult reason known only to miners, they thought existed at that particular point.

On the last day of my visit I went through the new workings — not the entire six hundred miles of tunnels, but in as far as this particular winze. I met the superintendent of the Union Mine — a burly, jovial, old fellow named Higgenson — who had spent almost as much of his life below ground as above, and who had worked in mines in all parts of the world. He had been in Tombstone when that camp was in its heyday and when he learned that I came from near there and knew something of the old town and its lurid history nothing was too good for me. Sure, I could go down whenever I wanted! Delighted to have me! Best thing would be to go in with one shift and come out with the one relieved. Better wear old clothes — kind of sloppy down there.

I presented myself at 12:30, wearing an old pair of

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army shoes, khaki breeches, and an o.d. shirt. Higgen-son snorted his disgust at the sight of such sartorial perfection.

“Take ’em off!” he commanded.

I obeyed — he certainly seemed to know his business — and presently stood in undershirt and shorts.

“Take ’em off!” said the superintendent again. These seemed to be the only words he knew.

Mine not to reason why, mine but to do and die of pneumonia. This was a brand new game to me — kind of a strip-solitaire! The underwear followed the outer garments to a chair and I waited *a la* Adam. Higgen-son promptly clothed me from his own locker with a more suitable wardrobe. Item: one pair of heavy wool pants, made to fit a man of twice my girth and lacking belt loops (which made it interesting.) Item: one blue flannel shirt, double breasted and as thick as a board. Item: an overcoat which, if stains, rips, and patches were any criteria, had been worn by Comstock himself in 1859. Item: what was said to be a hat — a shapeless piece of black felt, roughly circular in shape. I resumed my own shoes and stockings, was presented with a carbide lamp that developed a malevolent propensity to turn on its handle and burn a hole through my pants, and was ready for the descent.

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Five of us packed into the "cage." One man pulled a signal cord and who-o-o-o-o-sh!!! The thing dropped so fast that for a couple of breathless seconds I thought we were going to be left behind. I'll swear my feet left the floor and I didn't catch up to the cage for two hundred feet! They say there's no such thing as your heart coming up in your throat. That's a lie and I know it. My heart was in my throat and, what's more, it stayed there until the cage stopped and one of the men remarked that this "was the 2900 foot level." I'm glad they didn't drop us to the 3700, the greatest depth of the shaft. I'd had a hard time keeping my heart there in my throat and another thousand feet of that descent might have found it slipping between my tightly clenched teeth!

The overcoats were parked here and we walked, single file, through a vaulted tunnel illumined by the rays from the hissing lamp carried by each man. For more than a mile we walked, then halted and peeled off the shirts.

This stripping to the waist seemed a trifle odd to me for it was quite cool there, but I was not left long in doubt. Single file again, we turned a corner into the Sutro Tunnel and, as suddenly as you would pass from one room to another, stepped into a temperature of 105°! Was it hot? Holy Moses, the well-known torridity of

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hell with the blower on was a summer resort in comparison! My glasses clouded to opacity instantly. I removed them and carried them in my hand. In a dozen steps the sweat — in that heat it was nothing so refined as perspiration — was streaming from every pore. The naked muscular torso of the man who preceded me was gleaming in the lamplight — as wet as though he were standing under a shower.

“ They struck hot water in the old Yellowjacket workings,” he flung over his shoulder by way of explanation, “ and she’s floodin’ th’ tunnel. That’s the only way to get her out — run her out the Sutro and let her pour in the river! ”

The water *had* flooded the tunnel. For the greater portion of our journey we tramped through warm pools more than ankle deep. It was the heat of a conservatory, a moist, steamy heat that seemed to draw every particle of strength from your body. We passed its source — the abandoned shaft of the “ Jacket ” — and a few hundred yards beyond entered a zone of greater coolness. More than a mile of the tramp in the Sutro, however, was through this heat.

We reached the workings — much cooler there — and while we waited I learned more of the underground warfare that these “ hard rock men ” fought with subter-

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anean rivers and scalding springs. The kindly men of the shift that was being relieved most considerably delayed their departure for the outer air until the tender-foot had recovered, and while we waited we talked.

They told me of the "fifteen-minute men" — miners who worked in pairs at the breast while a third man kept them constantly under the spray of a hose, fighting with cool water pumped down from above the scalding streams that dripped from the rocky roof. Fifteen minutes on and an hour off was the rule, and four of these fifteen-minute periods were considered a full shift!

Quietly, undramatically, they told me of the myriad ways in which death came on those who worked in these depths — of a careless step into an unused shaft and bodies torn to fragments as they ricocheted from one side to another in a thousand-foot fall; of men decapitated by descending cages; of ore cars breaking loose and racing back down the tunnels with constantly increasing momentum to crush men against the rock barriers at the end of the track; of cave-ins behind which the trapped men either smothered or starved unless they could, as sometimes happened, find their way through the labyrinth of tunnels and drifts and shafts to another level or into another mine. And they told me of the most dreaded foe of all — of fires half a mile or more underground; of

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flame that raced like a swift, evil snake through the heavily timbered tunnels.

I commented idly on the fact that I had spent some time in the Air Service while in the Army and that I would infinitely prefer taking any kind of a chance half a mile above ground than the same distance below the surface. One and all, these men shook their heads.

“Not for me!” exclaimed one, a blond giant whose white body was spotted like a leopard’s with tiny blue flecks — particles of powder blown into his skin by some premature blast — “Not for me! That flyin’ stuff is too damn dangerous!”

They can have all the gold and silver that ever came out of the Comstock Lode if they’ll give me the value of the timber that is underground at Virginia City! The forests of the Sierras were stripped to timber those shafts and tunnels. Countless millions of board feet must be slowly rotting under the ground there. On the surface, Higgenson showed me a piece of wood that had been taken from one of the old shafts, a twenty-inch balk that had been compressed to a diameter of but two or three inches by the weight of tons of rocks pressing down upon it through a half century. Such compressed timbers were not uncommon, he told me. They are so hard that only a power hacksaw will cut them and their density is

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so great that they can be buffed to the lustrous finish of polished steel.

I'm mighty glad I saw those underground workings at Virginia City. It was a priceless experience — but mining is the last means of livelihood I'll ever choose in this world!

CHAPTER IX

THE VIGILANTE TRAIL



CHAPTER IX

The Vigilante Trail

DUTY called. So far the trip had been purely pleasure, but the prickings of conscience reminded me that I did have an object in view and that I was still a long way from Montana.

I left Reno about 10:30 on July 11th and that night threw my bedroll in the sagebrush about ten miles east of Elko. Ignoring Reno, my impressions of Nevada are of tremendous spaces — great sterile valleys, sagebrush covered, lying between ranges of rugged, barren mountains. Trees are a rarity, save for an occasional group of cottonwoods making a valiant struggle for existence where some hardy soul has developed a well.

On the southern route, from Reno through Austin to Ely over the Victory Highway, there is more kindly scenery. One is higher, about 6000 feet much of the

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way, and cedar and piñon mask the harsh outlines of the ranges. From Reno to Winnemucca, however, is a blasting desert. The thermometer on the Chrysler stood on 200° nearly all the way.

During the night my slumbers were rather dramatically interrupted. I was sleeping soundly when I was roused by a roaring motor. I did not think I was so close to the road that a passing car or truck would waken me, and sat up and peered into the darkness somewhat curiously. Then, directly over my head, roared the mail! It was a black, rectangular shadow blocking out the stars; riding-lights—I guess the proper title is cruising-lights—gleamed red and green from each wing-tip and a steady stream of violet flame spurted from the crashing exhaust.

I wanted to get up and cheer! There was I, crouched in the sage exactly as those pioneers who guided their ox-teams across this desert seventy-five years before. And there, but a few hundred feet over my head, was a man-made bird that the pioneers' wildest fancy could not picture—a motor-driven kite that annihilated time and space and brought the Pacific Coast within thirty-six hours of New York!

I could tell I was getting north. There was quite a little snow on the mountains around Wells, Nevada, although my altimeter showed only 5,500 feet and the peaks

The Vigilante Trail

did not appear to be more than a couple of thousand feet higher. At Wells I turned away from the through route to Salt Lake City, driving for Idaho through a country broken by copper-colored hills that reminded me of the Arizona mountains. The distant ranges were beautiful in soft, hazy blues.

Lunch in Twin Falls and on through American Falls to Pocatello and Idaho Falls. Long day's drive, following the course of Snake River for the major portion of the way. Idaho surprised me. For some reason I had always imagined the entire state as exceedingly mountainous but the southeastern corner that I crossed was as flat as a floor. I don't believe my altimeter swung 200 feet all the way from Twin Falls to Idaho Falls.

Good road — concrete for a change — from American Falls to Pocatello and on to Idaho Falls. Made the 52 miles between the last-named towns in 57 minutes, and since the weather looked very threatening took myself to a hotel. The move was a wise one for it rained in torrents all night long. The next morning was clear and I pushed on to the eastward through level, well-irrigated, fields of wheat, alfalfa, and potatoes, and with the mighty snow-clad rampart of the Grand Tetons, over the Wyoming line, drawing ever closer to me.

Those Tetons are sure real mountains. About 13,000

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feet high, covered with snow, and of a most inspiring ruggedness. They've been climbed, I guess, but I'm intimately acquainted with one man who has no ambitions in that direction. Personally, I've always regarded mountain climbing as about the lowest form of outdoor activity. The returns, when one considers time, money, and exertion expended, seem to me to be something noticeably less than nothing at all. However, the mountaineer would probably express an identical opinion of my enthusiasm over *trincheras* or broken shards of pottery that I've traveled a thousand miles, perhaps, to get, so it's about a stand-off.

“Can it be, when I was young,

Someone dropped me on my head?”

The roads of Montana are, I believe, the poorest of any state in the Union. Even the glorious scenery of the Rockies can't entirely make up for ruts, chug-holes, mud, and detours — to say nothing of broken springs or stone-bruised tires. I turned off the highway some twenty miles from West Yellowstone, heading northward across Reynolds Pass toward Ennis, Montana, and Virginia City, my goal.

The road was atrocious, the scenery superb. Great pine-covered mountains — the Rockies themselves — reared their magnificent heights on either hand. To the



"ROBBERS' ROOST." A STRONGHOLD OF THE MONTANA OUTLAWS

The Vigilante Trail

west was a great lake — I have a hazy recollection that it was marked on the maps as Lake Henry — and around it towered the mountains, the most lofty peak, Mount Sawtelle, being about ten thousand feet. Snow and pines and wonderful rich green grass sprinkled with myriad wildflowers. There were lupin, wild rose, and sunflowers; yellow blooms like buttercups, “Indian paintbrushes” of brilliant scarlet, a lacy white flower that closely resembled the wild carrot of the Pennsylvania meadows, and a host of others that were just flowers to me. (On one occasion I asked a man working for me at Descanso to identify a bird that perched near us. “I dunno,” he replied, “I’m no botanist.” By the same token, when it comes to flowers, I’m no ornithologist!)

For some miles my course followed the Madison River — a beautiful, clear, swift stream racing along over a stony bed. I got a tremendous kick out of these mountain streams of the Rockies — there are so many of them and they are so unbelievably clear. Some weeks later I was to drive from Helena to Lincoln, Montana, and return, crossing the Continental Divide by Stemper and Fleischer Passes. Every few rods, it seemed to me on that trip, there was a beautiful, hustling stream. The largest, the Big Blackfoot River, was, I was told, fourteen feet deep at the bridge. You could have seen a dime had you

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thrown one to the rocky bottom! To one coming from the waterless land of southern Arizona it seemed almost unbelievable.

"You don't know your luck!" I told the Montanans — and then I thought of the long, bitter winter that for seven months of the year locked these streams in its icy grasp and hid the green fields under a deep mantle of snow and I figured that the desert had its advantages, too. We may not possess a Snake River, the white foam of its falls gleaming against a background of dark pines and the darker cliffs of the tortuous cañon, but we have cañons more vast and colorful and a sun warmer and more kindly than any of which these mountain-dwellers ever dreamed.

I limped into Ennis in the late afternoon; limped in on a broken spring and a stone-bruised tire. (Served me right for starting out on Friday the thirteenth!) Virginia City, I learned, was fourteen miles distant on the opposite slope of the Tobacco Root Mountains. Say the notes I entered that night in the clean little hotel: "Lafayette, we are here. No accommodations whatever in Virginia, I understand. Town is dead. Guess I'll wind up in Butte or Helena."

Had breakfast the following morning, July 14th, in a little frame shack from the walls of which hung a fortune

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in mounted heads of great bull elk. Then drove on to Virginia. My informant had not exaggerated. The town that was once the capital of Montana and the metropolis of the Northwest Territory is dead! I spent an hour or so there, snooping around and — although unconsciously — applying my training as a newspaper man. There is a “museum” in the town, a stone building, unlocked and unguarded. An old man was cutting the grass along the sodded terraces that led down to the street. A short talk with the ancient sent me down the street to locate one “Jake” Albright who, I was assured, “knew all about the old days here.” Mr. Albright did not but, like sundry mademoiselles, he “knew somebody that did.”

“See Judge Callaway,” he advised, “Lew L. Callaway, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Montana. He’s studied the Vigilantes all his life and he’s forgotten more about the old days of Montana than any other living man knows.”

Betsy and I limped on — over ground that I was to learn was historic — and had lunch in the ugliest, dirtiest town I’ve ever hurried through — Butte, Montana.

For years Butte held the unenviable reputation among the cities of American of being a town where nothing grew. The fumes from the smelters killed every living green thing. Recently this has been changed. The smelt-

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ers are no longer permitted to vomit forth promiscuously their poisonous gases and there are struggling lawns, window boxes that hold smoky-looking geraniums, and — in yards and here and there along the ill-paved streets — young trees, for the most part the valiant, hardy cottonwood and other poplars. But the town itself is inexpressibly dirty and sordid. I returned from a walk of a few blocks with an impression of toughness, of an air of unfriendliness, and of a surly discontent that must be engendered by a total lack of civic pride.

It may be that my trade — the living of many hours in a realm of my own imagination — makes me super-sensitive, but I do get a decided reaction from towns. I have yet to see a mining-town — particularly a copper-camp — that created the feeling that here was a place I would like to tarry. It must be that something of the harshness of these ore-bearing rocks, the constant association with steel and blasting-gelatine and the roaring “heats” of the smelters, enters into the souls of the men and women who live in such places and becomes a part of the very fabric of the town itself.

I repeat, I hastened my departure from Butte. I turned again to the highway, to the clean, kindly hills and valleys; through the little towns of Basin and Whitehall and on to the capital of the state. To Helena I went,

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to find Judge Callaway, to draw upon his great fund of pioneer lore, to dig and delve and to return to dig again through the files of the Historical Library in the state capitol building, and to spend five weeks in the gathering of the raw material for a book—it's to be called "VIGILANTES!"—in which you'll be able to read all about Henry Plummer, sheriff of Bannack and also chief of the outlaws; his road-agent deputies, Jack Gallagher, Ned Ray, and Buck Stinson; of the Vigilance Committee and its leaders, Lott and Sanders and Cap Williams; and of robbery and murder and summary executions almost beyond counting. This present narration is one of travel, and of travel I did little while this work was in progress.

CHAPTER X

THROUGH MORMON-LAND



CHAPTER X

Through Mormon-Land

I FINISHED my work and mailed the rough draft of "VIGILANTES!" on August 18th and the following day, Sunday, set out once more on my rambles, with the little home in the cactus as an ultimate destination. I didn't leave Helena without regrets. I'm a lucky devil when it comes to finding a pleasant port in which to drop anchor for a space.

To me Helena will always bring recollections of the tolerance of Mrs. Jacobs, with whom I made my home, for lights that burned and a typewriter that clicked until unholy hours. I wonder if she still makes coffee according to my recipe of "throw in a silver dollar and if it floats the coffee's fit to drink." I think often of her and her pretty daughter Margaret, who presented the unusual combination of red hair and a sunny disposition; of Rose

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Mary McClain's struggles against an inherent fundamentalism; of Rae Fleming and Stanley Fletcher and the giddy day when we "called on the tryde" in Great Falls. Yes, I left friends behind me in Montana — friends that I hope I'll see again — but plans for a goodly portion of this trip had been made far in advance and Sid Stallings, my *quate*, was to meet me in Salt Lake City on the 20th.

My route was an historic one, following for virtually all its course the ancient stage route over the Boulder Divide, through Whitehall and Twin Bridges, and then along the Beaverhead River. Above Twin Bridges, I passed the famous Beaverhead Rock on my right. It looks about as much like a head of a beaver as it does like anything else. The old-timers had vivid imaginations when it came to naming things; but the bluff mass has been a landmark ever since the days of Lewis and Clark. Twenty miles above was the mouth of Rattlesnake Creek where, in the old days, men turned off to cross the hills to Bannack where Henry Plummer was sheriff.

I stopped for lunch in Dillon, and while we're waiting for the fried chicken I might as well tell you one of the stories that was not told in VIGILANTES—the tale of what happened to the skull of Jack Gallagher, Henry Plummer's deputy, who was hanged in Virginia City on January 14th, 1864. I may be thrown on my ear out of the

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Masonic order for spilling this open secret, but it's too good a story to keep.

Here goes. Jack Gallagher, as I said *supra*, was duly and truly stretched, passing to his reward in company with four other estimable characters yclept Frank Parrish, Boone Helm, Hayes Lyons, and Clubfoot George Lane. The five of them were buried on the crest of the hill just north of Virginia City and from the spot where the five graves lie one could almost toss a baseball onto the roof of the Masonic Temple.

Well, time passed and in the due course thereof the Masons of Virginia City obtained permission to install a chapter of the Commandery — the Knights Templar. Everything was set to make a big affair out of the installation ceremony, when whoever was in charge of the props was informed that two human skulls were required. I'm not a Knight Templar so I'm not giving away any secrets of the order when I hazard the guess that the crania are used to illustrate the fleeting quality of human life and the leveling influence of the grave to which we all, knights and yeomen, must eventually pass.

The noble brethren scurried around and located a Bannack Indian grave which they looted of one skull, but they still had to have another. Everyone was questioned as to his knowledge of any more Indian graves but none

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could be definitely located. Finally an old *hombre* named Grosch, a Virginia City butcher who had been a member of the Vigilante organization, came to the rescue.

"What's the sense of worrying about Injun graves?" he demanded. "Go up the hill and dig up one of them damned road-agents!"

The proposal was unanimously adopted. The Craft was called from refreshment to labor, picks and shovels were issued, and Jack Gallagher was presently exhumed, decapitated, and re-interred. The party returned to Virginia City and the installation ceremony proceeded with due observance of ancient ritual and tradition.

That's the tale that was told me at a Grand Lodge communication in the historic old town in August of 1928: and while I listened I held in my hand the central figure in the drama. Jack today, 65 years after his hanging, possesses a surface polish that I'll bet he never had in life!

That's the story and here's the lunch. Let's eat and get along, even as I did.

The air was hazy with the smoke of distant forest-fires and the odor of the burning timber struggled for supremacy with the sweeter scent of new-cut alfalfa. The Beaverhead Cañon, above Dillon, is quite spectacular.

Through Mórmon-Land

High cliffs and impressive erosions are on both sides and I noticed here and there outcroppings of hexagonal formations like the "Devil's Post-pile" south of Yosemite. Somewhere around Monida, on the boundary line between Montana and Idaho, I must have crossed the Continental Divide for I had supper that night in Idaho Falls on the Pacific slope and then drove on to Pocatello. The country hereabouts is entirely too crowded. One must go further south to find the great open spaces where there's room for a bedroll. Here were nothing but cultivated fields and many barbed-wire fences. I went to a hotel and, with the morning, pointed Betsy's nose south through Port Neuf Cañon toward the City of the Saints.

My journal entry for August 20th says: "Arrived Salt Lake City 12:50 P.M. Driving time from Helena 14 hrs. 30 min. Idaho roads generally good from Pocatello south except where they were being dragged and oiled. Struck Utah at Richmond. Passed through Smithfield, Logan, Mantua, Brigham, Ogden, Layton, Farmington, and Bountiful to Salt Lake. Cannot help but be greatly impressed by beauty and orderliness of Mormon towns. No slum quarters, or the dumps that are so common and so offensive around small towns elsewhere. Salt Lake

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is a beautiful city. Great wide streets, lots of trees, spotlessly clean. Impressive public buildings. And as many pretty girls as I've ever seen in any town in my travels."

Most of which is worthy of slight enlargement and comment. I know little of Mormonism. Mebbe Gabriel gave Joseph Smith the brazen tablets of the Book of Mormon. Mebbe not. Our Fundamentalist Christians would of course say "not"; while at the same time accepting without question the gift of very similar tablets to Moses on Mount Sinai, the conversational abilities of Balaam's mule, Jonah's sub-Mediterranean voyage, and other little details that some people think will require a heap of explaining.

I know a lot of the tales that are told about the Mormons. I've read Zane Gray's indictment of the custom of "sealed wives" and I've heard that other tale of the Eastern publishing house that sent two women reporters to Salt Lake City and had them there for a long time, posing as nurses and making observations of the home life of the Mormons. And the way the story reached me was that the revelations of the utter misery of the Mormon wives, their hatred of the lives they were forced to lead, were so terrible that they were never published!

All I've got to say is that if that misery exists, it is better concealed than any I have ever encountered. The

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women seem to be able to take plenty of time off from being miserable, to go to the movies, to dance, and to conduct themselves in all other ways as normal people contented with their lot.

I repeat, I know little of Mormonism, but I would welcome that missionary of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints who could explain to me what there is in that religion that produces such happy, contented people, such prosperous communities, such splendid public buildings, schools, temples, and highways. One never sees a road in Utah flanked by blatant, offensive advertising signs. There are no horrible roadside "garages" with their attendant bone-yards of Fords in various stages of decay. The houses all look like *homes*. Flowers are everywhere. Children look healthy and happy. People are courteous and friendly beyond belief to the stranger with their gates. There are forty-seven states in the Union that could very profitably emulate Utah in many things.

For example: I've been bawled out with varying degrees of rudeness by motor- and traffic-cops in many, many towns and cities. Without exception my crime was fundamentally that of ignorance of some local regulation. As I was highballing into Salt Lake a trim young fellow on a motorcycle ranged alongside, asked me to pull over

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to the curb, and gave me a printed folder. I've lost that notice, I regret to say. I'd like to quote it verbatim. But the essence of it was this: "Welcome to Salt Lake City. You're a stranger here and we know that you can't be familiar with local ordinances. Park where you want to—in front of fire-plugs or anywhere else. Make a U-turn any place. We are glad to see you and don't want your stay to be marred by anything. Come back again."

By a perfectly natural psychological process, so free a gift of liberty results only in making the average driver particularly careful about observing traffic laws. That's human nature. If you're told to use the floor if you feel like it, the impulse is to look around for a box of sawdust.

Now I ask you, towards which community do I feel more kindly; Salt Lake City, where I was welcomed as a friend, or San Antonio, Texas, where a grafting j. p. fined me \$18.20 (\$5 and *costs*) for driving twenty-eight miles per hour? Sure, I was guilty! I pleaded guilty. It was night, I didn't know I was in the city limits, and I was absolutely ignorant of the fact that the local limit was 20 m. p. h. So they socked me.

And just in case these memoirs should ever meet the eye of any of the minor judiciary of the Lone Star State,

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I want to r'ar up right here and brag that I personally and unaided have been responsible for keeping many times \$18.20 out of Texas! I have routed a good many people from the Southwest to the East, or back again, and not one of them has seen anything of Texas beyond a ninety-mile strip of the Panhandle. Revenge is indeed sweet — even if it doesn't get me back my \$18.20!!!

All of which is wandering a long way from Salt Lake City. Sid was waiting for me, having arrived by rail some hours previous. We spent Tuesday morning in looking over the town — they have a splendid ethnological and archaeological collection at both the Brigham Young and the University Museums — and in purchasing a few supplies that were necessary for our trip.

We spread maps all over one of the beds in our room at the hotel and had a delightful session figuring routes and where and why to go. That's almost as much fun as making the actual trip and far more economical of gas, oil, and tires. Learn to do it before you start any trips. If you can't enjoy traveling on paper, you won't get an awful kick out of covering the actual ground; and if you can discover the lure to be found in the mere names of unseen rivers and mountains the actual visitation will possess even more charm.

Take a map of southern Arizona. Softly repeat to

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yourself the names you read there. Chiricahua. Dos Cabezas. Dragoons. Baboquivari. Quijotoa. Tombstone. Galiuro. Isn't there romance and suggestion of allure in every syllable. No? Then get out! Arizona and those who love her want none of you!

Sid and I finally decided that southwestern Colorado and the Mesa Verde cliff ruins were more attractive than southern Utah and the purely scenic beauties of Bryce and Zion Cañons. Sid's an archaeologist and I'm something of a bug on the prehistoric cultures of the Southwest myself.

Our way led straight south to Provo at the foot of 13,000-foot Mount Timpanogos and then easterly through the Wasatch Mountains. A very beautiful ride. In the neighborhood of the little hamlet of Thistle are some of the most wonderful erosions in conglomerate formations I've ever seen. Came through Price Cañon about sunset—a most impressive sight. The cañon is very deep, six or seven hundred feet at least, with sheer walls of pale pink sandstone, eroded at the crests into fantastic peaks and battlements. Down in the depths of the cañon is the little mining town of Helper where we had supper.

A nice, quiet town, this one with the misleading name of Helper! The people speak their minds with a freedom that is, to say the least, surprising. The “seven Anglo-

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Saxon monosyllables," references to canine ancestry, and other terms which "What Price Glory" and "The Front Page" placed in American literature are bandied back and forth with glorious abandon.

As we drove down the main street we passed a man and woman talking on a street corner. A fragment of the conversation, in the man's voice, reached our ears: "... and that several varieties of blank tried to tell me ... " A few moments later a car in the stream of traffic was not traveling with sufficient speed to suit the driver immediately in the rear. He scorned using his horn. He leaned from the side of his car and vocally, verbally, and loudly, commanded: "Get a move on, you ... some more assorted blanks ... "

In the restaurant where we got our thermos filled there was a sign: "Use less sugar. Stir like hell. We don't mind the racket!" Another placard announced: "Everything fresh here except the help!" I'd be inclined, judging solely from appearances, to question the accuracy of that last.

We conducted ourselves discreetly while in Helper and left as soon as we had dined. The town's valedictory to us was the remark of a child — she could not have been more than twelve or thirteen years old — when I swung from the road under the mistaken impression that a

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cleared area in front of a ranch-house would make a suitable camping ground. My lights struck full upon her.

"Hey, you goddam fool," she demanded, "where th' hell do you think you're goin'?"

I did not think — I knew — that I was not going *there*. We highballed on though Price and thirteen miles east of that town pulled out in the sagebrush, to be lulled to sleep by the massed music of a coyote choir. There were probably five or six of the coyotes within a couple of miles of us, and they made enough noise for a thousand. I like the mournful wail. To me it typifies the Spirit of the Desert itself.

Just as we were settling down — I was in bed and Sid was reading Kidder's "Southwestern Archaeology" by the light of the car's lamps — we saw the most gorgeous meteor I have ever beheld. It blazed and crackled all the way across the sky, a long trail of white incandescence behind it, and finally seemed to vanish, still going strong, behind the eastern horizon.

We breakfasted leisurely and luxuriously in bed on sweet rolls and coffee, smoked a cigarette before rising to dress, and yet were under way long before seven. This system of traveling sure makes for extra miles at the end of the day! It's desert all the way from Price to the Colorado line — barren, sandy, and hot — but beautiful

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in soft gradations of color and in the eroded sedimentary rocks along the Green River. Before us, beyond Grand River, rose the timbered heights of the Uncompahgre Plateau, to the south were the La Sal Mountains, while far to the southwest we could see, dimly through the heat-haze, the outline of other distant peaks. My guess would be that they were either the Elk or the Henry Mountains. Touring "maps" are worthless for topographical details.

Supplemented our coffee and buns with waffles, syrup, and more coffee in Green River (hot, lonely, little one-street town) and drove on to a late lunch in Grand Junction, Colorado, passing through miles of fertile farmlands and orchards that illustrated how assuredly this desert does "blossom like the rose" when the ingenuity of man in placing dams and reservoirs brings water to the dry soil. The roads, in general, were very fair. Good graded dirt although, as we were approaching the Colorado line, there were a couple of washes that I'd hate to try to cross in wet weather. The water must come down there six feet deep and running like a mill-race!

Grand Junction holds for me one recollection that is worthy of narration. I bought gasoline there, gave the service station man a twenty-dollar bill, and then crossed the street to another station which I saw advertised the

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brand of oil I am in the custom of using and which seems best to suit Betsy's digestive tract. A few minutes later the attendant at the first station followed me to his rival's place of business and counted into my hand the change from the twenty dollars! Ordinary honesty, says you: but how often do you encounter it?

Which brings up the logical observation that no one knows what a real SERVICE station is until he crosses the Mississippi River. All you've got to do is drive in. Your tank is filled, your oil checked, your tires tested, your radiator filled, and your windshield polished without a word of instruction on your part. The attendant usually asks, "How's your battery?" and if there's any doubt on your part that important unit is tested too. The only charge made is for gasoline and oil. Nearly every station has state road maps for free distribution. That sort of stuff is real service — and you don't get it in the effete, civilized, and unfriendly East.

Sid and I left Grand Junction and reached Montrose about dusk. Thickly settled country and no decent campsites so we patronized a tourist camp — it advertised hot shower-baths and we were not entirely unwilling to wash off a few pounds of the sand we'd accumulated.

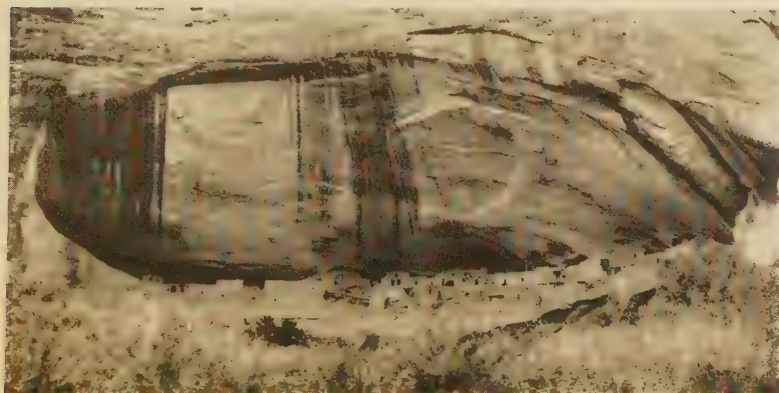
On the strength of information acquired from a youth at a gas station we laid over half a day in Montrose.



" . . . A PARADE OF MOUNTAIN SHEEP "



BETATA'KIN



KITSIEL RUIN IN ITS GREAT CAVE

Through Mormon-Land

Petroglyphs, we were told, were to be found in the Shavano Valley and we went out some twelve miles to have a look-see. Photographed several groups — one atrociously mutilated by vandals — and renewed our discussion of whether, somehow or some time, something might be “done,” in an archaeological sense, with the rock carvings that are so abundant throughout the Southwest.

It's a good discussion. We alternate in taking the affirmative and negative sides. One of us will get what he considers a bright idea — the possibility of tracing a relationship between disassociated groups of petroglyphs through their common use of the spiral or the volute, for example — and the other will promptly proceed to show him that he's full of ghost songs and 'way off the Reservation. Many an otherwise weary mile has been happily covered through this medium.

There was nothing particularly noteworthy about the rock pictures in Shavano Valley. The spiral was there, the “bear track,” and the omnipresent mountain goat. Elk, or deer, appeared in the group that had been vandalized and an old-timer who lived nearby told us that a long meandering line showed correctly every twist and turn of a trail that led from the valley to the ancient hunting grounds of the Uncompahgre Utes. He was a friendly old duck — his name was C. W. Banta — and he

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shared our hatred of initial-carvers. Not until we had demonstrated that our interest was purely scientific did he loosen up and reveal where he had concealed a coyote and a beautiful pee-rade of mountain-sheep.

Back to Montrose where we discovered another ancient named Thomas M. McKee. He has what is probably one of the finest collections in existence of photographs of cliff-dwellings, petroglyphs, and other scenes of archaeological interest. Used to travel Mesa Verde and the McElmo-Hovenweep-Yellowjacket area on horseback, packing a cumbrous plate camera. He has photographs taken forty years ago of the pinnacle dwellings along Green River. It would take a man a year to classify and index the old hombre's pictures but when he had accomplished it he'd have a collection that would be priceless. Pathetic part of it is that the old bozo hasn't the slightest idea of what it's all about. Knows nothing of pottery, refers to plain or mesa dwellings as "Aztec" ruins, and never heard of such a thing as the study of stratification of deposits. He'd heard of the Rainbow Bridge but had never been there. Like many another liar throughout the Southwest, however, he "had been within a couple of miles of it!" Lord, if only a man like Kidder or Morris or Cosgrove could have had his opportunities!

He had one relic from which I personally got a tremen-

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dous thrill. On an ordinary sheet of tablet paper a Ute Indian had drawn for McKee a picture of a rattlesnake. He had adorned the head of the reptile with long, curling horns like those of a mountain-sheep, and drawn just in back of the head a pair of short, fan-shaped, wings. McKee said he had expostulated with the heathen on the liberties he had taken with nature, and had received the reply: "Oh, snakes used to have horns, and wings too!"

Old McKee could see nothing out of the ordinary in the remark, but to me it was the folding back of another page in the strange history of mankind and its religions. Is there any land in the world where one cannot find the trail of the Winged Serpent?

We left Montrose after lunch. Durango, as I recall the legend on the sign-posts, was 125 miles and I knew that the greater part of that distance was through the mountains. Steadily the hills drew nearer as our road crossed and recrossed the railroad. To the left the closing ranges were capped by a dark chocolate-brown rimrock; on the right they flung a sharply serrated crest against the blue sky. Snow gleamed in every deep crevice and lay in great banks upon the higher peaks. The slopes were steep, almost precipitous, but on them pines found roothold, sweeping upward in lordly phalanx toward that line, as sharply defined as though drawn with a

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ruler, where the Gods of the Naked Granite said to the trees, "Thus far shall ye go and no further!"

These were the Rockies, lordly, terrible, inspiring — but through their fastnesses man had flung a road and the opposite end of that highway was our day's goal.

Ouray is a lonely little town in a pocket at the base of encircling peaks that tower 13,000 feet above the scattered dwellings. For months at a time it is shut off from the outer world by the deep snows and the avalanches that thunder down with the speed of express trains from the heights above. It's a mining town — and it's like every other mining town in the West today; dreaming as it dies of the days of its boom and existing in the hope that through some miracle the nearly exhausted veins will again produce their golden millions.

The main street slants down between old, unpainted buildings scarred by the storms of a score of winters. Many of the structures are now unused, vacant, their windows boarded dismally. When Ouray was in her prime these were stores and restaurants and saloons. Gambling halls, too; divided by a couple of steps, up or down, from the bars in reminder of the Colorado law that gaming tables must be either upstairs or downstairs from the saloons, never on the same level. The statute did

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not specify, however, the height that the stairway should be!

The street ends in the mountain, a great barricade covered with boulders and scrub oak. And up and over that barrier there runs the automobile road that crosses the ranges — the “Million Dollar Highway” from Ouray to Silverton!

Back and forth we zigzagged, following a broad, well-graded highway that seemed literally to defy the mountains. Behind us and far, far below, Ouray was a handful of dolls’ houses in the tiny valley dominated by a great pyramidal peak. Ahead were the high ranges and the dark green of the pines against the gray rocks.

The needle of the altimeter moved steadily across the face of the dial. Each curve was four or five hundred feet higher than the one before it. At the summit the instrument registered 11,300 feet — as close to Heaven as Betsy and I have ever been. The high altitude had surprisingly little effect on the motor. She pulled strongly on second gear and required very little more throttle opening than at more normal altitudes. Nor did she boil, although I had certainly expected this on a long pull at such an elevation. Curiously enough, I have found much more tendency to boil, and less general

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efficiency, at from six to seven thousand feet than at ten thousand. Here, crossing Red Mountain, it was necessary to use first gear only at points where the road was under construction and the going exceedingly rough.

The road, save for the stretches that were under construction, was excellent. No place for one who has not been thoroughly inoculated against what Winifred Dixon has so aptly named "horizontal fever," but a splendid mountain highway. There was one curve where for about two hundred yards I simply sat and held the wheel jammed as far as it would go to the right. The Chrysler fitted the curve exactly and the sensation was very similar to that of a tight power-spiral in an aeroplane. It was productive, however, of a vague sense of wonder as to what a chap would do if he were driving a car of longer wheelbase, a Packard, say, or a Rolls-Royce! He'd back and cut a good many times before he made those two hundred yards.

Red Mountain is well named. I presume its rocks carry a high percentage of iron — a ferrous oxide, I imagine — that has caused the peculiar, brilliant, brick-red stain. Before this motor highway was built, six-horse stages used to ply between Silverton and Ouray and the trip was regarded as one of the most scenic and adventurous in the West. It is no less scenic today, but the

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nearest approach to adventure was a narrow escape from a collision with a fool-driven Ford truck that we encountered a mile or two west of Silverton.

We did not pause in Silverton. I had been there twenty-odd years before and, so far as I could see, the town had changed little. It is as remote and isolated a hamlet as there is in Colorado. Like Ouray, it is cut off from the outer world for weeks on end during the terrible Rocky Mountain blizzards. Rescue parties used to fight their way through the drifted passes on snowshoes. Nowadays, when Silverton is famine-threatened, a blithe lad soars over in an aeroplane, drops food, medical supplies, and the daily papers on a parachute, and sails back to his base.

I first saw the town in 1905, traveling there by train from Durango, riding the narrow-gauge D. & R. G. that puffs along through the deep cañon of the Animas River. I didn't see any trains on this trip. I wonder if the locomotives in use today still have the huge "spark arrestor" stacks?

I was sorry that the road did not follow the Animas cañon. I would have enjoyed seeing those dark depths once more. Hemmed in by the cold granite one can readily understand how the river got its name—*Rio de las Animas Perdidas*, "River of Lost Souls." The cañon

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certainly looks like a Doré illustration of the portal to some Dantesque Purgatorio.

A moment's thought would have told me that there would be no room for a highway down there. As it is, the river and the railroad are crowded. The automobile road (it's U. S. Highway No. 550, by the way) climbs the mountains south of Silverton, loops back and forth across rounded summits covered with dead and fallen pines, pathetically wan and gray in the cruel sunlight, and drops down the course of, I think, Rock Creek to enter the Animas Valley above Rockwood. We didn't see the cañon, but to make up for it there were magnificent vistas of the rugged peaks of the Needle Mountains and the lordly La Platas.

Into Durango we piled about sundown. I hadn't seen the town since 1906 and was full of lots of noble notions about laying over there for a day or two and renewing acquaintanceships with men and women who had been boys and girls in school with me. Good intentions! You know where they're used for paving blocks. It was a case of man proposes but Bacchus disposes.

"Let's eat first," said Sid. "It's too late for you to try to *buscar* a meal out of any of your old friends."

A sign indicated a coffee-shop in the Strater Hotel and I swung Betsy's nose into the curb, switched off the

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motor, and stretched. My eyes, roving upwards idly, encountered those of a man at a second story window. In one hand he held a brown bottle, in the other a glass filled with an amber-hued liquid in which swam tinkling chunks of ice. He grinned. I groaned. He leaned over the sill.

"Thirsty, you fellows?" he challenged.

"Hell, yes!"

The responsive duet was instant and, apparently, convincing. Sid held his hat aloft, resembling a somewhat soiled and unshaven young acolyte elevating a censer.

"Pour, brother, pour!" he implored.

"Come on up. Room No. 4."

We went.

"Sid," said I fervently, for I had driven many hard miles that afternoon and was plenty tired, "if that *hombre* is taking us for a buggy ride I'm going to go back to the car, get a gun, and run him ragged!"

"I'll help you," my *quate* promised, "but let's wait and see."

The wait was not for long and we saw. The gentleman introduced himself and I did the graceful for the pair of us. He was from Washington, in Durango on business connected with a mining property in the La Plata Mountains, and recognized the name Birney as belonging to a

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few of my kin-folk in the District of Columbia. He knew them all, or claimed he did, and we were friends immediately.

"Go to it, fellows," said he. "I got that quart from a friend in one of the embassies. It's Canadian Club!"

He was truthful as well as generous. It was Canadian Club!

We spent a thoroughly enjoyable hour with this most gracious and hospitable gentleman, had some dinner, and crossed the street to fill up with gas. I suggested returning to the hotel and stopping there for the night.

"Oh," said Sid, "it's only thirty-some miles to Mancos. Let's drive about half way and camp. You're getting soft!"

I found the road — the city fathers have not changed the streets since I used to ride out past the D. & R. G. station and across the Animas to gallop through Porter Cañon to dances and baseball games at Fort Lewis — and we slid smoothly on through the night. Wire fences were everywhere, and each attractive location seemed to be some farmer's front yard. Other sites were deep in weeds — the lush growth of the short, damp, mountain summer. We inspected one place after another. None were satisfactory. Then houses began to appear more frequently, and a sign by the roadside told us where we were.

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“Lord, we’ve come clear to Mancos, Sid! No chance of finding a camping-place now.”

We located an auto-camp. Everyone had gone to bed but we prowled around and eventually discovered an unoccupied cabin and moved in. It was the end cabin of a row and when I awoke the next morning I peered through the window and saw, all golden-brown in the early sun, the long, scalloped line of the Mesa Verde against the southwestern sky-line and, dominating the escarpment, the great sheer-walled cape that men have named Point Lookout.

CHAPTER XI

A TALE OF DEAD CITIES



CHAPTER XI

A Tale of Dead Cities

TAKE a block of wood 1,500 feet in height and with its roughly circular perimeter measuring several hundred miles. Gouge and scallop its rim eccentrically, scoop out the interior in a saucer-like depression eight hundred or a thousand feet lower than the rim, and then score the bottom of that saucer, from north to south, with dozens of cañons and gorges another thousand feet in depth. The result will be the Mesa Verde, land of mystery, of interest, and of charm.

The Mesa Verde dominates the Montezuma Valley and Point Lookout dominates the Mesa Verde. From almost any angle of approach the great cape — its altitude is 8,425 feet — is the most commanding feature of the landscape. The new road that the government has constructed swings about the foot of its bluff mass and then follows close along the rim over a course that has been given the descriptive and not inappropriate title of

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"Knife Edge Road." It's a beautiful drive. To the north the vertical rim-rock and scarcely less abrupt talus slopes of the Mesa Verde drop away into leagues of rolling hills covered with piñon, juniper, and the hardy cedar. Beyond lie the fertile farmlands of the Montezuma Valley, crossed by a white ribbon that is the road from Mancos to Cortez; and still further is a wilderness of sage and piñon, of rolling uplands, gashed by the mighty cañons of the McElmo, Hovenweep, Ruin, Yellowjacket, Montezuma, Cross, and their countless branches and tributaries.

Encircling and protecting all are the mountains — the snow-covered La Platas, from Mount Hesperus to the Lone Dome; the La Sals, the distant Blue Mountains and the twin peaks that are called the Bears Ears; and in the immediate foreground the line of the Ute Mountains. (They call them "Sleeping Ute" now, some brilliant press-agent having dug up a fancied resemblance in the profile of the range to the figure of a recumbent Indian. An appropriate Indian legend, known to all but the Indians, was evolved from the same source.)

The road dips and swings along the Knife-edge — it is no less — between the rim of the mesa and the heads of Morefield Cañon and Prater Cañon and Soda Cañon and its forks, then bears almost due south along the broad ridge — they call it Chapin Mesa — that lies between

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Soda Cañon and Navajo Cañon. To the south we gaze across the miles on unending miles of the Mesa Verde, staring until the eyes ache into the blue haze of New Mexico and towards the distant crests of the Carrizo and Luk-a-chukai Mountains. In the haze, beyond the south rim of the Mesa, swims the peak of Ship Rock, a 1,500-foot spire of volcanic rock and one of the most remarkable igneous formations to be found in the Southwest.

From the higher points we can trace the course of the cañons and we know that there is scarcely a mile of any of these gorges, nor an acre of plateau between them, that does not hold a cliff-dwelling, a storage cyst, a house-site, or some other physical record of the prehistoric Pueblo peoples of the Southwest. I counted 212 ruin sites on the topographical map at Park Headquarters and then quit, too lazy to count further. And since that map was made — printed in 1915 and based on the survey of 1910–1911 — many new ruins have been discovered.

Few of the tourists who, in thousands, visit the Mesa Verde each season can possibly realize how tremendous a population this irregular tableland supported some ten or fifteen centuries ago. The tourists visit the three largest cliff-dwellings, Spruce Tree House, Balcony House, and Cliff Palace; see “Sun Temple” and possibly the Farview group of mesa-pueblo structures, and then go

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on their way. One would have to spend a month on the Mesa, riding every day, before he could acquire a really comprehensive idea of the extent of the culture that flourished there.

I had been on Mesa Verde twenty-three years before — in 1905. At that time there was only a two-room log cabin on the bench immediately above Spruce Tree House. I was prepared for changes, but for nothing as striking as I found.

Charley Frinck's old cabin is gone. It either burned down or was demolished in the course of a construction program in which it had no place. Above where it stood a busy little city covers the entire point of Chapin Mesa between the branch cañon in which stands Spruce Tree House and the main ravine of Spruce Cañon. There's a fair-sized hotel (good grub and almost worth the flat rate of a dollar a meal that is charged), numerous tents and cottages that are rented to tourists, and quite a group of artistic 'dobe structures — museum, recreation hall, administration building, and so on — that make up Park Headquarters.

We ate, and then strolled down to the community building that the Park Service has erected on the cañon rim directly above and across from the Spruce Tree House. From the deep porch we gazed down on the dead

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city; a town of more than a hundred tiny rooms built of boulders shaped by long, tedious pecking with stone hammers; a yellow-walled city perched in a great cool cave, shaded by tall pines that cling to the talus slope that pitches abruptly down to the cañon floor far below.

The sensation as those broken walls met my eye was not empty of emotion. Twenty-three years before I had stood in almost this precise spot and had seen Spruce Tree House, my first cliff-dwelling. It seemed that centuries, aeons, had elapsed since that day in the fall of 1905. I'd wandered far. I'd lost and I'd gained. I'd known adventure, adversity, and some measure of success. I'd known sorrow, too; partings with loved ones and the more poignant pain of lost illusions and confidence misplaced. An appalling amount of water had flowed beneath the traditional bridge — but here I was again, and the rectangular black windows of Spruce Tree House still stared across the cañon like dead eyes in an ivory-yellow skull, eternally mocking the ephemeral emotions of mankind.

Hell, why struggle with philosophies? It'll be all the same in a hundred years!

There's a good trail down to the ruin, and a short cut to the cañon floor by means of a ladder lashed against the cliff. We used the ladder and spent an hour or more

prowling around Spruce Tree House, photographing, inspecting, and bickering amiably over details of kiva construction and types of masonry. Then back to the rim and a pleasant couple of hours in the museum where, with a thrill of pleased surprise, I once again encountered my old friend Cocopelli.

Cocopelli, archaeologically speaking, is quite a character! He's been dead a couple of thousand years, more or less, but in his day, in his limited sphere, with the meager transportation facilities available, he was a traveler that made the Prince of Wales look like a sea-urchin! He was deformed, pathetically deformed, was Cocopelli. His head was thrust forward almost to his breastbone by the great hump between his shoulder-blades. His arms and legs were frail and thin, terminating, as in many hunchbacks, in grotesquely huge hands and feet. He must have suffered considerably, for in many of the pictures that have come down to us he is shown in a reclining position.

Where he was born, and when, and where his poor broken body was entombed, are mysteries — lost in the long count of years before America had a history. This much we do know: Cocopelli was the first of the troubadours, following that profession over what is now Arizona and New Mexico and Colorado many centuries before Christoforo Colombo persuaded Isabella to take her dia-



SPRUCE TREE HOUSE, MESA VERDE

" . . . BEFORE COLUMBUS PROPOSITIONED ISABELLA "

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monds around to uncle's. He was a flute-player, and he and his flute traveled together for hundreds of miles over the desert areas of the Southwest.

Wherever he went he was "photographed." Cocopelli undoubtedly was a personage, and a visit paid by him to any community was considered worthy of memorialization by pecking a record of the musician's presence on the smooth rocks of the cañon walls. Cocopelli and his hunched back and his flute appear in petroglyphs in the Rio Grande Valley, in Chaco Cañon, and I think, though I cannot be positive, in Cañon de Chelly. He visited the Tsagi Cañon and the great communal houses of Betata'kin and Kitsiel. He and his flute appear on pottery from the Valley of the Little Colorado, and he also wandered to the northward, crossed the San Juan, and called on the tribes who built their homes in the cañons that gashed the high plateau of the Mesa Verde. And one prehistoric potter, at least, recorded the musician's passing by painting his likeness on the inner surface of a large shallow bowl.

Cocopelli (the archaeologists took his name from a Hopituh legend) must have been a distinct individual. It is stretching coincidence too far to assume that each of the various culture areas would have produced a hunchback (a deformity that is most rare among the Indian

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peoples, by the way,) who was a flute-player. Nor is it particularly logical to assume that he would be pictured in regions that he had not himself visited. And it seems to me, an amateur dabbler in archaeology, that the presence of Cocopelli in these various areas that were, culturally, quite distinct from one another, is a very strong indication that the prehistoric Pueblo peoples of the Southwest spoke a common language or at least were closely related linguistically.

I get a tremendous kick out of Cocopelli. I'd like to write him up some day, to use him as the central figure about which to weave an idyllic prehistoric romance. He's the one *individual* that has survived the vanished races. Cocopelli, the hunchbacked minstrel; the flute-player, the teller of tales, the singer of songs; and, apparently, a swordsman that would make Jurgen of Poictisme look like Francis of Assisi!

We left him — regretfully — and wandered back to the hotel to write up our notes and, greatly to our amusement, to find ourselves suddenly regarded as intrepid pioneers. Even at the risk of getting ahead of my yarn I must tell the story.

She was an estimable, friendly lady of plump middle age. Her home was in Chicago and until she and her husband had made this Western trip via Buick sedan she

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had never wandered from the safe concrete highways of the Middle States. To her the Mesa Verde was the end of the last dim trail and she saw herself as a feminine incarnation of Kit Carson, Frémont, and Padre Kino. She was enthusiastically ebullient about their long journey and we got into a spirited conversation.

I spoke (honest t' Gawd I wasn't braggin') of some of the places I'd been during the summer — Grand Cañon, Yosemite, Montana — and mentioned that Sid (peacefully writing on the other side of the room) and I had met in Salt Lake and were going on through to Tucson via Kayenta and Flagstaff.

Immediately she was greatly interested. Wanted to know the make of the car we were driving and all the rest. Asked if we were stopping at the hotel and I told her no, that I didn't know where we were stopping as I hadn't yet learned what attitude the park authorities took towards those who traveled without the modest protection of a tent.

"Do you mean you don't have a tent?" she gasped, astonished. "I thought you said you camped out most of the time."

"We do," said I. "We each have a bedroll and we just pull off the road and chuck 'em down. A tent's really not necessary in this country."

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"Well, you have cots, haven't you?" she insisted.

I told her that these evidences of civilization were also lacking.

"But aren't you afraid of snakes — sleeping right down on the ground like that?"

I assured her that while I didn't like snakes and certainly didn't seek them for bedfellows yet I never gave them a thought and that Sid and I had camped out a good many nights in various regions that were more or less snake-infested and had never been annoyed. I mentioned that the only nocturnal excitement we had ever found was when a couple of coyotes came into our camp in the Papago country, and that they had fled when Sid sat up in his blankets and hurled boots (and language) at them. Had my *quate* slain a tiger with his bare hands the good lady could not have regarded it in more heroic light than she did his repulse of the coyotes.

"But how about rain?" she demanded at last.

"So far we've been lucky. It doesn't rain much in the Southwest. Anyhow, we've both got tarps and if it rained we'd pull 'em up over us and keep fairly dry."

I have never seen a person more profoundly impressed. She called her husband away from his paper and told him the whole story of our daring. Nothing I could say could shake the conviction that Sid and I were of the stuff

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of which heroes are made. My statement that dozens of men and women did the same thing at all seasons of the year in our part of the country was accepted as a very becoming modesty.

The head ranger told us that lack of tents was all right with him so long as we didn't crowd other folks too closely. He suggested that we pull in towards the north end of the camp-ground where there was a community recreation hall that would shelter us in case of rain. We followed his advice—a wise move, for early the next morning I was awakened by a lusty clap of thunder and roused to find the western sky ominously black. After a wild five minute scramble we were safely under cover and listening to a young deluge drumming on the timbered roof. The sun was shining when we awoke and we dressed leisurely, rolled our beds, and drove up to the hotel for breakfast. My lady friend of the night before was in the lobby and she fairly beamed when she saw me.

"Oh, I'm so glad to see you," she bubbled. "That rain woke me about four o'clock and I didn't get to sleep again until long after it had stopped. All I could think of was you two poor boys out in it. Tell me, were you all right?"

Her anxiety was so apparent, her solicitude so genuine, that I scarcely had the heart to tell her that the storm

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had proved no more than a momentary inconvenience. She did so want to be thrilled! And I realized as never before how vicariously most people in America are compelled to take their adventures. Things that Sid and I regarded as matters of course, incidents no more worthy of note than the purchase of a pack of cigarettes, were to this lady — and there are many like her — adventures as daring and romantic as ever befell Speke, Livingstone, or MacMillan.

* * *

I had come to the Mesa Verde a cynic, prepared to scoff at the "restoration" that the government had done. I had seen those dead cities when they were ruins; seen them as the Wetherills, O'Brien, and scores of other pot-hunters had left them, and I had heard old John Wetherill characterize as blasphemy the lavish use of concrete in reinforcing and capping crumbling walls and the anachronism of covering kivas with wooden hatches. I sneered at Fewkes, regarding him as one whom Nature had intended to be the proprietor of a small-town drug store and then, with high irony, adventitiously miscast him as an archaeologist. I mocked the importance with which he regarded unreliable Hopi legends of clan migrations, his eternal "ceremonial" as a descriptive title for artifact or building of obscure or indeterminable

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use, and I laughed gleefully at his frequent employment of the term "quadruped."

I came to scoff; I remained to pray. Southwestern archaeology, with its inseparably associated sciences of ethnology and anthropology, has advanced far beyond Jesse Walter Fewkes and his pretty little Hopi fairy tales, but the fact remains that the old man did a wonderful, wonderful work on Mesa Verde and that work is being extended and continued in most admirable fashion by Superintendent Nusbaum, the Head Ranger (I wish I could recall his name), and their associates.

I had imagined that the trails to the various ruins would be marked and that Sid and I would wander to Cliff Palace and Balcony House at our own sweet pleasure. Nothing of the sort! The prehistoric dwellings are far too precious to permit tourists to visit them unchaperoned, to clamber over frail walls, and to eat hard-boiled eggs and peanuts on the banquettes of ancient kivas. You fall in line for the grand tour and you're taken to the various ruins with a park ranger as a guide and most efficient cicerone.

These tours are supplemented by talks each evening about the campfire in front of the Administration Building. Various members of the staff give brief, accurate, and almighty interesting little addresses on Southwestern

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archaeology and the work that is being done on Mesa Verde.

They speak of the great importance, archaeologically, of tracing the development of corn from the wild, heavy-seeded *teocintli* grass of the Mexican highlands that has been identified as its ancestor, and touch on the highly significant discovery at Pyramid Lake, Nevada, of a pre-historic people that did not have corn, citing it as probably the most ancient culture that has thus far been located. Then they carry on through the Basketmakers, who knew nothing of pottery manufacture, and their sudden and inexplicable disappearance and on to the introduction into the Southwest of the first of the Pueblo peoples, pit-house builders, makers of crude pottery; and the gradual rise and decadence of the true Pueblos, the expert potters, the builders of community houses, compounds, and cliff-dwellings, the peoples whose sphere extended from the Chihuahua Basin to Great Salt Lake.

It's splendid, there's no other word to describe it! The tourist who visits the Mesa Verde today leaves there with a good basic knowledge of what it's all about. He'll never refer to the prehistoric dwellings as "Aztec" ruins, he'll never speak of them as "representing a civilization older than that of Egypt," and he'll get nothing but a large and joyous laugh out of such books as "The Lost

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Continent of Mu" — a volume whose author intended that it be taken seriously.

It's history that sticks to one far better than that assimilated through text-books, for it's learned right on the ground where the events took place and Spruce Tree House itself, built by these ancient peoples, lies scarcely out of range of the speaker's voice.

Of course there will always be people similar to the lady who demanded of one of the rangers information as to why "the cliff-dwellers built their homes so far from the railroad!"

Sid and I made the grand tour to Balcony House and Cliff Palace, accompanying a party of some fifteen or twenty other tourists and accompanied by a ranger who rode at the head of a caravan in a Ford coupe in which two girls were traveling. (Being a ranger on Mesa Verde has its compensations.)

Balcony House is in a deep cave some hundred feet below the rim of mighty Soda Cañon. The ruin faces east, is very well protected, and is probably the best-preserved of any of the Mesa Verde dwellings — if not of the entire Southwest. It is a small village, rather inaccessible, and was not looted so systematically as Cliff Palace and Spruce Tree House. The rangers tell, however, of a "priceless" cliff-dweller loom that the Wether-

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ills, regarding it as a mere bundle of sticks and hunting only for "pots" and "mummies," threw over into the cañon. Nordenskiöld, they say, recovered a portion of it, the balance was reclaimed by other scientists, and fragments of the loom are now in three or four museums in Europe and America. John Wetherill ridicules the story, claims that the artifact wasn't a loom at all but an object of some unknown "ceremonial" purpose — hiding behind the most overworked word in Southwestern archaeology. It is noticeable, however, that Hosteen John does not deny that the "bundle of several hundred sticks" was thrown over into the cañon and eventually recovered therefrom!

John, the last survivor of the Wetherill brothers, has now reformed. He has advanced with the times, he has seen the error of his youthful days, he regards himself as an expert archaeologist, and none is louder than he in denunciation of promiscuous pot-hunting. But his new virtue can't conceal the fact that Al and Richard and Ben and John Wetherill, not to mention their brother-in-law Charley Mason, did an ungodly lot of pot-hunting on Mesa Verde and in other areas. Gossip is that they overturned walls with pickaxe and crowbar and even used dynamite on several occasions. The dynamite story is open to question, but it is certain that there was little

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care, little science, little thought of the interest of future generations, in these "researches" and the collections went to anyone who would purchase. Could Waterman or Kidder, or even Cummings, have studied Mesa Verde as it was when the ruins were first discovered, have compared the pottery and artifacts from the various sites, have gone through the rubbish heaps and plotted the stratification of pottery-types, our knowledge of the prehistoric Pueblos would be far more comprehensive than it is today.

But the damage is done — and is irreparable — so what availeth it man to gripe?

We admired the beautifully preserved balcony (there's a sign forbidding tourists to sit on it) that extends across the fronts of two rooms and gives the dwelling its name. A coating of 'dobe mortar was laid over bundles of cedar bark superimposed on slender rods bridging the spaces between the beams that are the ceiling of one room and the floor of that above. Many of the cliff-dwellings must have had these balconies, for the beams were very rarely trimmed flush with the wall, but virtually all of them have been totally destroyed save this on Mesa Verde, which is today as it was when some old hunter sat there, wrapped in deer-skins or a feather-robe against the evening chill, and gazed into the darkening

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depths of Soda Cañon. I think — though none of my photographs confirm the recollection — that there's a balcony preserved in one of the ruins of the Tsagi Cañon.

We squeezed through the narrow passages that make Balcony House the most skillfully planned dwelling, from a point of view of defensibility, of any on the Mesa, climbed the long ladder to the cañon rim, and drove on to Cliff Palace.

This is the largest of all the ruins of the Southwest — the largest and the most beautiful. It lacks the coloring of Betata'kin, that

“rose-red city half as old as time,”

nor can the cave in which it is built compare with the mighty vaulted cavern of the ruin in the Tsagi, but for sheer beauty, for tiny irregular plazas, for square-windowed houses grouped about hidden kivas; for ancient masonry walls, duly and truly laid; for the great bulk of the mysterious round tower that dominates its southern half; for the beauty of broken lines in its terraced mass — for these Cliff Palace stands alone!

Largest and most beautiful of the great cliff-dwellings, it was also the first to be seen by the white man. It was on a December day in 1888, that Richard Wetherill

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and Charley Mason, ranchers of the Mancos Valley, riding the Mesa Verde in search of strayed cattle, pushed through the dense piñon growth to the rim of a cañon and saw, far below, the ruined walls and blank windows of this great community dwelling. That was forty years ago, and Cliff Palace today is more beautiful and more interesting than when the two ranchers scrambled down the rough trail to explore its mysteries.

The Park Service have widened, graded, and improved that trail. Dr. Fewkes and his colleagues have cleared the deserted rooms of the rubbish of years and the scars of vandalism. The kivas have been cleaned out and one can study the construction of these circular subterranean chambers where primitive man gathered about the rude altars in elaborately ritualistic ceremonies.

It was in Cliff Palace, incidentally, that government excavators discovered the only relic of the Basketmaker culture as yet found on Mesa Verde. From beneath a great rock in the central section of the dwelling they dug out a single sandal of the old, distinctive, square-toed Basketmaker type. How did it get there? Your guess is just as good as any other! Think it over for a few minutes, remembering always that the people who made moccasins of that type had vanished many centuries be-

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fore even the pre-Pueblo culture had arrived in the region, and then ask yourself why the subject of South-western archaeology is so fascinating.

We allowed the caravan to get ahead of us when we left Cliff Palace. I had talked with the Head Ranger and obtained his permission for the pair of us to go on by ourselves to Sun Temple and Square Tower House. This permission to visit ruins without a guide is granted very rarely and we felt duly honored.

Sun Temple is on a high promontory on the west side of Cliff Cañon slightly south of, and across from, Cliff Palace. Until excavated by Fewkes in 1915 it was merely a huge mound of earth in which grew aged cedars and piñons. It appears now as an elaborate double-walled structure containing twenty-four rooms partitioned off in the space between the parallel walls, and four large circular enclosures that Fewkes has designated as kivas.

One can indulge in more speculation regarding Sun Temple than any other structure on the Mesa Verde. The very name is a gross misnomer for there are no grounds for assuming that the ancient dwellers in this region were heliolatrous. The sun *may* have been worshipped by the Mesa Verde peoples, but every indication is that their religion was a complex one and that the rites in the many kivas were in veneration of the deities of a polytheistic

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pantheon. Fewkes christened the Sun Temple after discovering, built into the exterior wall at the extreme southwestern corner of the building, a rock on the surface of which appears a fossil "with depressed central zone with sharp radiating ridges."

The fossil (the latest dope is that it is the remains of a Cretaceous spring) does somewhat resemble a conventionalized "sun," but the shibboleth which Sid and I have adopted and which we bark at one another about six times daily is "science must be skeptical!"

If the fossil is a sun-symbol — and sacred — why was not the "temple" built around it? Why is it in a not particularly conspicuous position in the outer wall, far from the entrance, unconnected with any room and, apparently, unprotected by a roof or other covering? The "sun shrine" — it's a shrine without an altar, by the way — must have had some significance, that I admit. But I claim — and I'm only a bungling amateur archaeologist who eternally wants to know *why* — that there's absolutely no justification for the assumption that this circular fossil was the shrine of the temple, or for the application of the title "Sun Temple" to this structure.

Furthermore — and this is some more of the eternal why — save for the fact that they are circular in plan the "kivas" of Sun Temple do not possess a single one of

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the features that distinguish the true kivas of the Mesa Verde. They are not subterranean but are circular walls built upon the ground. They have no banquettes nor the pilasters by which the cribwork of the roofs of other kivas was supported. There are no fire-places, no deflectors, nor do the floors show the round opening — the “sipapu” of the Hopi — that appears in virtually every kiva in the Southwest and is generally accepted to symbolize the entrance to the underworld from which mankind sprang. True kivas have ventilator shafts, too; and the nearest approach to a ventilator in the circular structures at Sun Temple is a subterranean trench running beneath the south walls from a point several feet outside the wall almost to the center of the enclosure. In the fourth “kiva” at Sun Temple, located some fifteen feet off the southeast corner of the main building, even this is absent.

I think Fewkes is right in his assumption that the complete absence of roofing beams and other timbers indicates that the construction of Sun Temple (dammit, I've got to use that name) was abandoned before the building was completed. But who built the impressive edifice, and what purpose it was intended to serve, are mysteries that will never be solved. There awaits discovery no Rosetta Stone with its key to the secrets of Southwestern prehistory!

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Well, gentle readers, I won't bother you further with my half-baked archaeological blitherings and my criticisms of my betters. We left Sun Temple and visited Painted Kiva House—a small, very badly-ruined dwelling in the west wall of Soda Cañon. The decorated kiva that gives it its name wasn't worth the heart-breaking scramble down the rough trail.

We had another tough climb going down to Square Tower House and Little Long House—with the difference that it was worth it. Square Tower House is most picturesquely situated in Navajo Cañon, and gets its name from the four-storey tower that is its most conspicuous feature. Here, too, is a kiva with at least three-quarters of the original roof still intact. It's worth the long climb to study that roof construction and to observe how the pilasters in the kiva walls were utilized as supports for the arching cribwork. While Sid was copying some petroglyphs on the rocks at the western end of the dwelling, I risked my fine young neck climbing high up the cañon walls to the south and got a splendid picture of the ruin in its shallow cave.

We drove to Cedar Tree Tower, interesting for the fact that within the round tower there is an entrance to an adjoining subterranean kiva, paused at the interesting group of buildings known as Farview House near the

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north end of Chapin Mesa, and then highballed on through the cool dusk to Mancos, leaving behind us the most alluring, the most educational, and the most mysterious of the National Parks of America.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: More than a year after these sketches were written, in the National Geographic Magazine for December, 1929, Dr. Andrew Ellicott Douglass, Director of Steward Observatory, University of Arizona, announced the result of his years of research and definitely determined the construction dates of many of the prehistoric ruins of the Southwest.

Dr. Douglass prepared a "tree-ring calendar" by comparing the inner rings of three and four hundred years old pines, growing today, with the outer rings of trees used in the construction of mission churches built during the 17th century in New Mexico. The inner rings of the beams from the missions were then compared with the outer rings of beams from ruins that were known to have been occupied during the late prehistoric period.

A log from Showlow ruin, Arizona, finally bridged the gap between the historic and the prehistoric, its growth rings linking it with logs from both older and more recent

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structures, and the following construction dates were determined:

Pueblo Bonito, Chaco Cañon, N. M., 919, 1017, 1033–92, 1102, 1130.

Cañon de Chelly area:

White House, 1060–96, 1219, 1275

Mummy Cave, 1253–1284

Mesa Verde:

Cliff Palace, 1073

Oak Tree House, 1112

Spring House, 1115

Balcony House, 1190–1206

Square Tower House, 1204

Spruce Tree House, 1216–1262

Aztec, N. M., 1110–1121

Little Colorado area:

Wupatki, 1087–1197

Citadel Ruin, 1192–1260

Fewkes Ruin J, 1192

Kintyel, 1284–1495

Turkey Hill, 1203–1278

Kayenta area:

Betata'kin, 1260–1277

Kitsiel, 1274–1284

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Dr. Douglass' announcement knocks into a perpetually-cocked hat virtually all the hokum that has for years been associated with the prehistoric communal houses of the Southwest. It takes from them nothing of their charm, nothing of their interest, but no longer can the Pueblo culture be styled "a civilization antedating that of Egypt" by writers who may know English but whose ignorance of archaeology is abysmal.

I consider his publication of his findings the greatest single contribution that has ever been made to American archaeology. Were he a Briton he would probably be knighted, in France he would be made a Grand Officer of the Legion d'Honneur; here in America there will be a few hundred people who will say to him "Well done!" I want to be one of them.

CHAPTER XII

ROADS AND MONUMENTS



CHAPTER XII

Roads and Monuments

SOMEWHERE in America there may be—I say there *may* be—three hundred miles of road worse than that between Cortez, Colorado, and Tuba, Arizona. There may be, but I doubt it; and I know I would not wish to drive it.

Of course, it's not *all* bad. I presume that even in hell there are days when a cooler breeze blows from the brimstone lakes and Cesare Borgia and Judas Iscariot lay aside their palm leaf fans and speak reminiscently and longingly of flannel underwear! Between the two towns named there are stretches now and then where one can open up to thirty miles an hour and hold that terrific speed for perhaps a mile before being forced to shut down

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on account of deep sand, its consistency as fine as flour; expanses of naked wind-swept rock; or for steep descents covered with treacherous, loose boulders.

In the main, however, the road is merely a "way through"; less rough than the sandy desolation of salt-weed, turpentine bush, and stunted sage that lies on either side. A dirty, exhausting trip—but to one who has learned to love the desert best of all the "visible forms" it is a trip that is marvelously beautiful. Three hundred miles that road leads; three hundred miles that for grandeur of coloring, for unusual and distorted stratification, and for spectacularly weird erosions can be nowhere surpassed. The famous and much-advertised Garden of the Gods, near Colorado Springs, could be dropped down in a corner of Monument Valley and lost; lost for all time among the infinitely grander and vaster wonderland of eroded sandstone that has given that valley its name. Lukai-chukai and the great pierced mass of Round Rock is a National Monument in itself, but not one American in ten thousand has ever heard of it or the mighty "Gooseneck" of the San Juan River, a turreted dome nearly a thousand feet high, worn to its present shape by the river that swirls ceaselessly about it in a course so nearly a complete circle that only a ten-foot-thick dike separates the channel of the stream's en-



"FEW HAVE SEEN, OR EVEN HEARD OF, THE GOOSENECK OF THE SAN JUAN."

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trance from that through which it dashes out once more on its way to the distant Colorado.

Those and countless minor wonders are attainable by that rough road from Cortez through Kayenta and Marsh Pass to Tuba. And by that road one can reach a point where saddle and pack are taken to complete the journey to the greatest wonder of them all, a flying buttress of red sandstone, a three-hundred-foot arch as graceful and delicate in its proportions as though cut by a lapidary, "Tsa-nodzelid Nonnezoshe," — the tremendous span of the Rainbow Natural Bridge. It is — but I'm getting far, far ahead of myself. Let us go back to Mancos and start fresh over that road.

Sid and I found friends in Mancos, members of the college fraternity to which we both belong, and Ventress Wade's first words to me were:

"So you got the letter I sent you in Helena."

"I must have left before it got there. Why?"

"No matter now. Ed Adams and I are going down to Kayenta and then up to Ben Wetherill's place on Navajo Mountain and on in to the Bridge. The letter was just to ask if you and Sid wanted to go along."

Foolish query! We learned that they were starting Monday morning and Sid and I decided to spend Sunday prowling around the Hovenweep country and to meet

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the others in Bluff on their way. We camped near Cortez that night (Saturday) and got away to an early start on Sunday, purchasing a couple of cans of beans and some crackers for a wayside lunch. Had we been clairvoyant we'd have stocked up more generously — but how were we to know that this peaceful Sabbath was to bring us the closest to Adventure that we were to experience on the entire trip?

We drove first to a site on the mesa above Ruin Cañon where the Denver Museum had been conducting excavations. Poked around, collected a few shards, criticized the quality of the work, and then drove on. It's a lonely region, this plateau country of the Utah-Colorado border. The irrigation that has made the Montezuma Valley a thriving, thickly-settled farming community has not penetrated to this land of piñon and fragrant gray sage. In miles we saw only two houses, both deserted.

Just to make the sense of desolation more complete it started to rain — a slashing, driving thunderstorm that rapidly converted the twin ruts through the sage (the "road" is no more than that) into a slimy, skiddy mess. We saw several of the round towers for which this region is noted, but on account of the rain and the sloppy mud through which we would have to plow decided to forego closer inspection. There are many of them on the head-

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lands overlooking the mighty cañons that seam this region. In some the walls are single, others are double-walled, and in one case, at least, the ground plan would be represented by three concentric circles. Three walls of stone would make a pretty tough fortress to reduce, particularly when one remembers that the enemies of the old builders were armed only with bows and arrows and stone axes.

The rain ceased, but every arroyo was running like a mill-race and the narrow road — in places winding along the face of steep hills — was treacherous in the extreme. We churned through a couple of pretty soupy spots — once narrowly escaping a gorgeous slide over the edge — and then met trouble.

Really, it didn't look so bad — we had crossed several washes that were running far deeper and more swiftly — but what I did not see, or the significance of which I failed to realize, was that the road, after diving down at an abrupt angle to the narrow, muddy stream, had been undercut to a really dangerous degree by the rapid waters. Betsy rolled down the grade and made the hub-deep ford without difficulty. I shifted into second and gave her the gun for the climb out to the more level ground. The car's weight was too much for the soft, undercut bank up which the path led. There was a

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moment of sickening uncertainty, of swiftly spinning wheels, of a vain effort to find traction, and then car and road together slid slowly, backwards and sideways, into the wash!

For a second I thought we were going to turn over and shouted to Sid to jump, figuring I'd stand a better chance of getting out if I were alone under an overturned car. Sid's a good soldier. He obeyed orders instantly, but the command was unnecessary. The Chrysler's center of gravity is plenty low and Betsy was right side up when we landed in the muddy water.

It didn't take long to find out that the valiant little wagon would not get out unassisted. The swiftly coursing waters swirled around and under the wheels and she presently was resting on her wide running boards and the differential housing. Two Indians came along, one Ute on horseback and a Navajo in a wagon. The Ute savvied a little Spanish and my Navajo was sufficient to get by with the other heathen. Each of them knew at least two English words.

"Ten dollar!" they said, after a brief inspection of the mired car.

My soul sickened at such evidence of the gross commercialization of the noble American aborigine. Neither my Navajo nor my Spanish was really adequate for the

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situation, but I knew how to say "Go to hell!" or its equivalent in both languages and I repeated it nine times, hoping thereby to convey the impression that I'd let the car stay there till it took root and sprouted before I'd shell out ten berries for fifteen feet of towing.

We had learned that there was a store at the crossing of Yellowjacket Cañon, five miles further, and Sid set out to see if assistance could be obtained there. After what seemed a long, long time a Ute boy appeared and told me that my *amigo* was not coming back until morning. I cursed Sid's laziness, dined on beans and crackers, hauled out both bedrolls, and camped. Not until morning, when a rather bedraggled Sid showed up about eight o'clock, did I learn that he had attempted to ford the flooded Yellowjacket, had been forced to swim, and had made the opposite bank only after a considerable struggle. I was glad I hadn't known of it the night before. Worry doesn't help slumber, and I'd have felt fine if I'd had to notify Stallings, Sr., that Sid was en route to Needles via the San Juan and the Colorado! He had found a Ford that was going to Cortez by the lower road and had sent word of our plight to Vent Wade and the others we were to meet in Bluff.

While we were waiting another native showed up, a Ute. His English, too, was limited to "Ten dollar," but

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after he found there was nothing stirring he loosened up and got real friendly. He'd been singing the old "Hello Hah-nay" song that I've heard hundreds of times on the Navajo Reservation and I asked him how come a Ute to be singing a Navajo song. Rather to my surprise he assured me that it was a Ute song too; that the Utes used to sing it many years ago when they lived in Oklahoma. I never knew the Wemnuchie Utes were ever in Oklahoma — I don't think they were — so ethnologically the old boy's statement was probably all applesauce, but it's rather interesting just the same. The words of the song are, of course, Navajo, and the Ute and Navajo tongues are not akin. I gave him a cigarette and nearly scared him to death with the electrical lighter on the dashboard. He thought that was "Chinde" (devil) sure, and said so about a dozen times. Only his desire for a smoke gave him courage to put his face near the contrivance.

We were on the main "highway" and our friends showed up shortly after nine o'clock. How they heard of our predicament shows the friendliness of the dwellers in that untraveled region. The man to whom Sid had talked had not been able to reach Wade by telephone. He told a couple of people in Cortez what had happened, the news was broadcast, and by the time John Wade and



“THE TWINS.” THE COLOSSAL GUARDIANS OF BLUFF, UTAH

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Ventress reached the town the next morning everybody knew it and they were stopped a dozen times and informed that two friends of theirs were in trouble up above the Yellowjacket.

I never travel without a tow-cable and the Buicks of Mike Costin and John Wade, pulling together, soon had us out. The latter's mother, "Grandma" Wade, was with him and when we stopped for lunch at Recapture Cañon the old lady told us of the days when they drove in buckboards or rode horseback from Mancos to Oljeto—taking a week for a journey that we were making in a day! I sure appreciated the lunch she had packed, too. My breakfast that morning had been water from my canteen and ten cents' worth of jelly-beans that I had bought in Mancos to give to Indian children I might encounter along the road.

We had a grand race to beat the flood waters to the crossing of Montezuma Creek and a lovely moment of uncertainty when John Wade, who was leading, stuck in the sand on the western bank. The rest of us, three cars, were strung out across the dry ford, and less than a mile away was the advance guard of the water that would make that crossing a bed of quicksand in about three minutes.

Again Adventure—or should one call it Disaster, at

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times the two are closely akin — passed me by. Johnnie-azhe's Buick coupé heaved and grunted, backed up, and forged ahead in a shower of yellow sand thrown up by the spinning wheels, and he was out. The rest of us followed over the trail he blazed.

Bluff is a sleepy little Mormon village on the banks of the San Juan. It was settled by the pioneering Saints who came down from Salt Lake to found St. George and Panguitch and Escalante and then made that truly marvelous (and entirely unrecorded) trek across Kaiparowits Plateau, through the Hole-in-the-Rock, and across the San Juan. They found a wonderful spring — with a very little development it maintained a continuous flow of many thousands of gallons a minute — and there they settled, built their homes, and planted their crops. High above the little hamlet tower two mammoth sentinel buttes — “The Twins.”

We gassed up there. It's the only place between Cortez and Kayenta that one can obtain that fluid that is even more precious than water to the desert traveler of today, and we were mighty glad to see the gauges standing at “full,” even if it did cost 45 cents a gallon to put them there. I knew I was nearing the Navajo country when I found a silver button, made from a dime, in my change. A third of the dimes and quarters you will find in a trad-

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er's cash-drawer have copper loops soldered to them. The Navajo wears his savings-fund on his vest or his hatband and makes withdrawals with a knife instead of a check-book.

Some day I hope I'll make the trip from Bluff to Kayenta in the company of a darn good geologist — with Herbert Gregory or Arthur Houle. I'd like to know more of the whys and wherefores of the sedimentary rocks along the San Juan Cañon, and of the forces that produced those weird dips and folds in the strata yet apparently did not succeed in breaking them into definite "faults."

We crossed the San Juan at Mexican Hat and I strove — from a distance of a mile and with very poor success — to photograph the great mushroom rock, resembling a sombrero turned upside down, that gives the crossing its name. There's a one-car-at-a-time suspension bridge there. Safe enough, I guess, but it sways like a tightrope and you can't help wondering where you'd fetch up if a cable snapped. It's quite a little drop to the San Juan, the waters are swift, and the bottom almighty rocky.

A few miles west of the Mexican Hat crossing is one of the least known and at the same time most remarkable natural wonders of America — the Gooseneck of the San Juan River. Some of these days, when the country

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is better known and general interest justifies the expense, there'll be a side-road leading to it. Today, you go there on horseback — and try to find the horses! You're a long way from a livery-stable at Mexican Hat.

Although it is really only a few miles off a fairly well-traveled road, very few people have seen the Goose-neck of the San Juan: and yet, in its way, it is as remarkable a freak of erosion as the Rainbow Bridge or the great red capes at Lukai-chukai. Some few aeons ago, something happened there to change the course of the San Juan. The river, flowing westward to meet the Colorado, struck a snag and made almost a right-angled turn about a sandstone outcropping. In time the path described by the stream was almost circular about the base of a low hill.

And through all the years nothing has occurred to change that condition of affairs. The river still whirls about the foot of the hill, now nearly a thousand feet high and rising in a great cone in the center of a mighty circular amphitheater surrounded by sharply descending walls of red, brown, and yellow. The stream makes almost a complete loop, a dike less than ten feet in thickness dividing the point of entrance of the rushing waters from that of their exit: yet that ten-foot barrier has

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stood while the patient stream has borne away thousands of tons of rock and sand to form the cone.

Like everything else in this region of wonders, the Gooseneck is hard to visualize and even more difficult to describe. I can say only what I did of Grand Cañon: Go there and see it for yourself!

The sun was low in the west when we crossed the northern end of Monument Valley. The old route to Kayenta, by way of the post at Oljeto—"Moonlit Waters"—went straight through the Monuments, passing between the great Mitten Buttes—two huge monoliths of eroded sandstone that shoot up for several hundred feet in exact resemblance to a pair of tremendous gloved hands with separate thumbs.

Some few aeons ago—Gregory's map indicates it as Permian time—this valley, the major portion of which lies in Utah, was several thousand feet higher than it is now. It was not a valley then but a massive plateau of solid sandstone, red in color, heavy, and strongly cross-bedded. Incidentally, if you ever travel this Southwest, you will be aided to a much clearer geological understanding of the region if you will keep in mind the fact that none of the vivid red coloring of Grand Cañon, of Havasu and Sedona Creeks, of Monument Valley, is the

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natural hue of those rocks. All of it is stained, dyed, if you will, by the wash from strata that have disappeared so many million years ago that they're scarcely worth worrying about. The natural color of these sandstones and limestones is various shades of gray, and now and then one finds springs the constant flow of which has carried away the crimson stain and restored the rock to its original, less brilliant, hue.

Well, back somewhere about the time that you were a tadpole and I was a fish, that force that we call erosion started to work on the great sandstone plateau. There was no "mighty convulsion of nature" or any of the other "tremendous upheavals" and "seismic disturbances" to which some people are prone to attribute all of nature's marvels. Nature doesn't often work in a hurry. It was all very slow, very deliberate. Springs became rills and the rills grew to rushing torrents that sought the easiest way down over the rocky surface and carried with them, in ever increasing quantity, the sands of the soft strata. Perhaps—and this is a purely personal hypothesis—perhaps the process was aided and hastened somewhat by a slow submergence and equally slow emergence of the region under the surface of the ocean that at one time covered all this portion of America.

In the course of a few hundred thousand years the once



MONUMENT VALLEY. TAWNY SANDS, CRIMSON SPIRES, AND PURPLE SHADOWS

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mighty plateau was seamed by cañons and must have looked very similar to the Mesa Verde today. Erosion continued. Tributary gorges widened before the racing waters. At times a narrow wall of sandstone collapsed and two cañons became one with only a great peak of rock to mark the location of the rampart that had once divided them. Slowly, but ever continuously and inexorably, the work went on. Here and there were spots — tiny islands on the plateau — that the waters avoided; here and there were areas of harder, more densely compacted strata that resisted the floods. And when all semblance of the original plateau had disappeared, when the cañons and ravines had vanished into a single wide valley, these isolated spots remained. The waters have been gone for ages. The valley is as dry as the Sahara. Only a few bitter springs, their banks white with alkaline encrustations, their surfaces green with slimy algae, exist today in its million sandy acres.

But through that sand there rear a thousand mighty towers and buttes and pinnacles of water-carved, wind-polished stone; hundreds of feet high, more slender than cathedral spires; defying every law of gravity, wind-resistance, or mechanics of material; fretted and arabesqued like the Alhambra; as chastely severe as the Washington Monument; as thousand-spired as Milan

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Cathedral; shaped as weirdly as the gargoyled battlements of Notre Dame: Monument Valley, a valley of monuments to the capabilities of Nature when she is in a mood for whimsy!

Sunset was approaching as we passed among them. Light conditions were marvelous — unreal in depth and variety of color. Each separate monument — and as we stopped our cars on a high ridge and gazed off to the southward their number was legion — glowed with an orange-red flame under the level rays; their eastern faces splashed in sharp contrast with blue-black shadows that softened and deepened to a royal purple. It was a valley of monuments and a valley of flame; lofty crimson spires like leaping tongues of fire and their long black shadows like smoke across the tawny sands.

Cloud shadows racing across the abyss of Grand Cañon, the ineffable peace and beauty of the Land of the Sky Blue Waters, the full moon rising over Navajo Mountain and bathing the Rainbow Bridge in silver light, and sunset in Monument Valley — God has been very generous with me in such sharing of His “visible forms.”

We carried on through the gloaming. Four cars — two Buicks, a Chevvy, and a Chrysler — plowing through sand and rocks toward the tiny little outpost of civilization that is Kayenta. I think all four got stuck, momen-

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tarily, at various stages of the trip, although none had to be shoveled out or towed to firmer footing. I know three of them were in occasional trouble. John Wade — “Johnny-azhe” — was leading the caravan. I was riding in the Chevvy with Ed Adams — promoting myself to passenger as an excuse for nursing a pretty healthy gash on my hand, received when I’d shoved Sid out of the Chrysler when we had our little adventure the day before. Then came “Betsy” with Ventress Wade at the wheel and Sid as passenger, and lastly “Mike” Costin — his real name, given him when he was a sweet, handsome, innocent child, is Preston — with Lewis Wade and a girl cousin. Mike insisted that he came through without sticking, but he was well in the rear, keeping out of our dust, and no one could check up on him.

The driver can do mighty little sightseeing on a road like that. He’s got to watch where he’s going for almost every second that his car is in motion. A patch that was hard ground yesterday is buried today under eight or ten inches of soft, treacherous sand; and yesterday’s sandbanks are today’s wind-swept rock.

There’s only one way to drive that sand, particularly the long stretches. Hit it hard, wide open, with all the speed you can muster in the short space available. The second the car hesitates, the instant you feel the sand

clutching at your wheels, shove into second and give her the gun once more. Speed through, keep rolling, motion means safety and progress and a halt is fatal. But — there is always a but — there can be such a thing as too much engine speed. Tires have a habit at times of refusing to bite on the yielding surface beneath them. The wheels do not exactly spin; they seem to bounce up and down on the sand, spinning, with a shrill whine of axle gears, when clear of the ground. To the driver it is a curious sensation that is instantly recognizable. When it occurs shut off the power instantly, shifting into a lower gear if it seems necessary. Shut off quickly, too; for a very brief continuation of that bouncing spin will strip every tooth out of the driving pinion — and you're nearly two hundred miles from any repair shop!

Ed was tickled to death over coming through without mishap. He'd driven the road only once before and faced each prospect of sand with considerable trepidation. "Hot dam! We know our sand now!" he exclaimed after each conquest.

It was almost dark as we passed El Capitan — a volcanic needle more than twelve hundred feet high that thrusts itself from the rolling plain. The Indians call the peak Agathla — "much wool" — from the ancient custom of going there to scrape sheepskins and deer hides on

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the rough volcanic rocks. The Spanish name was bestowed on it by Kit Carson who came through this region in command of the expedition that pacified the Navajos. The old scout did a thorough job, too. The Navajos haven't made any trouble since!

Owl Rock — Tsa-geke — a slender pinnacle of sandstone on the rim of Tyende Mesa — was a topheavy silhouette against the darkening sky. I could scarcely distinguish the entrance to Tsagiotsoi Cañon that opens into the mesa below the Owl Rock, but I knew I'd never forget the trip that Betsy and Vent Wade and I made, over no roads at all, into that deep gorge. An Indian came in to Kayenta and told us of a cave where no white men had ever been, and of a mummy that was there. We made the journey to discover that as a liar he had Ananias looking like George Washington. Kidder or Guernsey or Cummings had been there and the ruin in the cave was thoroughly excavated and neatly swept out. The "mummy" was a human skeleton so completely disarticulated that none of the previous explorers had thought it worth carrying away. We re-buried it at the foot of a great rock at the front of the ruin, if you want to go after it!

It was a great trip, though. We covered in a couple of days territory that would have taken us a week to traverse

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with horses. We drove an automobile where none had ever been before and where I'll lay a fair bet there'll not be another for a long, long time. When we climbed out of the car and took to our feet, the cañon walls — or rather the walls of the wash we were following in the bed of the cañon — were so close that ten feet ahead of Betsy's radiator cap we could touch them on either hand.

It had been a brutal climb over naked rock and through lashing scrub-oak to the cave in the sheer cliffs beneath the rim of Tyende Mesa. Failing in any archaeological discoveries, we named it Cavern Disappointment, but the trip had not been a total loss. Standing beneath the arch we had gazed out beyond the red cliffs, quivering in the noon-day heat, and watched a thunderstorm racing across the level parapet of Skeleton Mesa.

Tonight, as I rode along with Ed Adams doing the work, Tyende and Skeleton Mesas were black profiles against the gathering darkness. It was pitch dark when the four cars crossed Comb Ridge, and played follow-the-leader around the dangerous turn and down the sharp descent to Laguna Creek. We climbed the steep hill beyond the ford and saw, friendly beacons in the darkness, the distant lights of Kayenta.

CHAPTER XIII

A DAY OF REST



CHAPTER XIII

A Day of Rest

THE gang of us spent a couple of days at Kayenta, resting, renewing friendships with the Wetherills and Clyde Colville, and, on my part, with Harry Nurnberger, as good a friend as I have ever possessed, who calls this lonely little spot-on-the-map home. One night was marked by an impromptu dance at the school-house, followed by a poker-game in which four brothers in the Bond strove valiantly to rob one another and to demonstrate to the outsiders that poker is not a game of chance.

While we're resting, I am going to go chasing off on an unnecessary detour and tell of another experience — one not occurring in the course of this particular summer of 1928 — that came my way in the Navajo country.

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Some of you have heard the tale, others have asked for it; and being one who strives to please his public, all six of them, I have dug the yarn from the mothballs of memory, polished it up, and have actually had the nerve to call it a chapter in these reminiscences. Here it is.

Cañon de Chelly, its portal guarded by thousand-foot cliffs of salmon-pink sandstone as sheer as the Washington Monument, cuts like a gaping, irregular sword-slash into the long slopes where the Chuska Mountains fall away into the Chin-lee Valley of eastern Arizona.

A short distance from its mouth, a branch cañon, equally mighty, swings off to the northward. This is the Cañon del Muerto — the Cañon of Death. On every ledge in the great cliffs stand the ruined walls of prehistoric houses, homes of the cliff-dwellers that, a thousand years ago, built in the caves far above the cañon floor these remote refuges from their many enemies. There are dozens, hundreds, of these houses, large and small. Into many of them the invading white man has never set foot. Others never will know his presence, for through the years that have elapsed since the dwellings were abandoned, great sections of the cliff faces have sheared off, the soft strata yielding before wind and weather and the patient, inexorable power of the summer rains. The

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ledges that once made the dwellings accessible have disappeared and the houses now stand, hundreds of feet above the cañon floor, in caves set so far back into the cliff that not even a rope let down from the overhanging crest would reach them.

You will be told that the Navajo Indians gave the cañon its grim name because of the abundance of the dead houses that line its sheer walls. Other spinners of tales of the desert will maintain that the Navajo legend is to the effect that hundreds of years ago their ancestors and the dwellers in the cliffs fought a bitter battle for the dominion of this forbidding land of Tusayan. The slain covered the red sands of the ravine and the gorge was ever afterward known as the Cañon of Death.

It seems almost impious to debunk such ancient authorities, such self-venerated experts, but the cold hard truth is that the Spaniards named the cañon following a fight in which one of their military parties slaughtered a band of several hundred Navajos — men, women, and children — that had sought refuge from their pursuers in one of the great caves that had been abandoned by the prehistoric races. The marks of the bullets can be seen to this day, silvery splashes on the red-brown sandstone, and one can view pictographs drawn on the rocks by the Navajos, paintings of men in body-armor mounted on

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horses, of a priest in a black cassock, and of the Cross that ever rode in the van of the Conquistadores.

We had spent a week in Cañon de Chelly, Pat Horton and I. We had climbed to caves that had been thoroughly explored and to many that had not. We had risked our worthless necks a dozen times daily for what any sane individual would consider the idiotic purpose of inspecting fragments of beautiful black-on-white pottery, of picking up a few arrowheads or fragments of yucca-fiber moccasins, and of copying pictographs.

However, we had had what we considered a good time, although we were both of us dog-tired. We rode out of the de Chelly and that night off-saddled and unpacked in a tiny, un-named cañon some fifteen miles on our way to Lukai-chukai. There was good water in the ravine, clear and sweet, without a trace of the alkalinity that renders unpalatable so much of the water in the Navajo country. Stranger still, there was abundant feed for our four horses. It was almost unbelievable to find a spot that the Indians' sheep and goats had not cropped down to the grass-roots and then, with thousands of tiny, sharp hoofs, trodden those roots into the yellow dust. We had abundant food for six or eight meals and we decided that the morrow would be a day of rest, a true Sabbath upon which we would do no manner of work.



NAVAJO MOTHER



AMERICAN BEDOUINS

A Day of Rest

We cooked supper and then watched the sun slowly sink beyond the leagues of desert that extend westward across the southern end of Monument Valley to isolated Kayenta, red-walled Marsh Pass, and on to the sullen rivers that men have named the Big and Little Colorado. Great painted buttes and square-topped chimney-rocks bit black rectangles into the horizon line, their shadows lying like splashes of indigo smoke across the tawny sands. The Carrizo, Chuska, and Lukai-chukai Mountains, behind us, were crimson, violet, and finally purple in the waning light. We smoked in silence, neither of us inclined to be articulate in the face of the daily miracle of this miraculous land, and at last tramped through the darkness to where our beds were spread under the western face of a great rock that assured protection from the awakening rays of the early morning sun. Tomorrow, we averred, ours would be the unusual luxury of waking and rolling over for another nap, and the day that was to come would be one of super-indolence.

Habit is strong, however, and in spite of our intentions we were up shortly after sunrise. The breakfast dishes were yet unwashed when a Navajo Indian, mounted on a strikingly marked pinto pony, clattered down to our camp. He shook hands with us, gravely, as was fitting to the inherent dignity of an Indian, but immediately

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broke into rapid speech. Pat and I tell ourselves — and our friends — that we speak Navajo, but truth dictates the admission that there are, at times, appalling *lacunae* in our vocabularies, individual and combined. We joined forces in translating and, with the aid of signs, obtained the information that another Indian had been badly hurt by a vicious horse. It developed further that the assistance of the supposedly omniscient white man was desired.

Our visitor affirmed that it was but a “little way” to the camp of the injured man, but we each knew how far an Indian’s “little way” could be. Pat rounded up the horses, with able assistance from the Navajo, and we mounted and rode for several miles to the southward. A group of hogans — the circular, dome-shaped, mud-plastered habitations of the Navajo — lay in a valley between two low gray hills. The injured man was on a pile of sheepskins and filthy blankets spread on the ground beneath a shelter of cottonwood boughs and brush. His left leg was propped high on the blankets, twisted horribly midway between knee and ankle.

“*Kleea doyashon!*” he muttered as Pat and I bent over him. His face, under the bronze of the skin, was ashen.

We agreed that the *kleea* (horse) must have been very bad. Both bones of the lower leg were broken and

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there was scant encouragement for amateur surgeons in the fact that neither fracture had torn out through the skin. There were several empty packing cases about the camp and, fortunately, a plentiful supply of wool. The Indians had been shearing their sheep during the preceding week and were packing the fleece for transportation to the trading-post at Round Rock.

Our treatment was heroic, for the accident had occurred at dawn and the torn muscles had set about the break. Our patient fainted, but when he revived we had his leg in a position fairly close to normal, wrapped in stinking wool, and confined in an improvised fracture-box.

Using round sticks as pulleys, I rigged a rope so that a fair-sized stone exerted a direct pull on the injured member. A fifteen-year-old girl in the camp had been to school, I knew. She wouldn't talk English — not one Navvy in a hundred will — but I knew she could understand me and I strove to impress on her the necessity of keeping the patient absolutely quiet, flat on his back, and the leg straight out in front of him. Additional weights could be added, I told her, to prevent the broken limb from shrinking as it healed. She listened to the instructions with that attitude of blank, maddening stupidity of which only an Indian is capable, but I hoped she would translate to her elders after our departure.

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Pat gave the older men a vivid pantomime as to the care of the injury. He twisted his own foot to one side and the other and informed them that such positions were *doyashon* — very bad. Straight up, he illustrated, was *yahtay* — good. And between us we demonstrated the purpose of the tackle we had rigged and the importance of keeping the rope taut. A man, we said, should ride to Fort Defiance and summon the Government doctor from that lonely post.

(Months afterward, Pat learned that the doctor had never been summoned, but that the fractures had united with but very slight shortening of the limb.)

While we labored at surgery, the women of the camp had been preparing food and it was offered with the grave courtesy of the Navajo, the most dignified of all the Indians of America. We dined on fried mutton and bread similar to the *piki* bread of the Hopis — similar, but not so paper-thin and lacking, praise Allah, the plentiful admixture of wood ashes that gives *piki* its characteristic gray hue. There was parched corn, too — yellow, red, and steel blue — and a small bag of trading-post candy as dessert. We passed around our tobacco sacks after the meal and the men rolled the brown paper and flaky Durham into cigarettes of incredible slimness. We smoked, spat solemnly into the fire, and conversed haltingly with

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our hosts while wolfish mongrel dogs sneaked into the hogan in search of scraps of food that had been overlooked by the children whose meal had followed ours.

Our leave-taking was abrupt and, when judged by the white man's standards of etiquette, highly discourteous. The Navajo tongue includes no valedictory, the belief of the Indians being that to say farewell is to imply that death or great misfortune might prevent future meetings. Occasionally one will hear used the monosyllabic, nasal *tih* — "I go" — but ordinarily a visitor simply rises and departs. Pat caught my eye, motioned imperceptibly, and we left the camp.

"Fine, fat day of rest this has been," he growled as we jogged down the valley. "Let's make sure the pack-horses haven't gone over the hill and then turn in for some bunk-fatigue."

We located the pack-animals, washed the neglected breakfast dishes, and were lazily overhauling the larder when we were again interrupted. This time our visitor appeared from the eastward.

"Maybe he saw our smoke and is just looking for a chance to spear a meal," Pat hazarded, "but he's coming pretty fast. He's in a hurry, that *hombre*."

The Navajo jerked his pony to a stand, shook hands hastily, and astonished us by speaking English.

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"My woman — she sick. Much sick. You come. Little way."

Again we took the trail, riding over the ridge to the east and then turning north to another camp. Our guide led us to a hogan a counterpart of the habitation we had visited that morning. Two others, one flanked by a tiny, mud-plastered sweathouse, stood nearby. A group of morbidly curious children clustered about the entrance to the largest dwelling, from which came the familiar soft, throbbing cadence of an Indian drum and the sound of a Navajo chant. We dismounted, thrust the wide-eyed children to one side, and stooped to pass through the narrow doorway into the dim interior.

The sick woman was the central figure of a dozen Indians and even two such inexpert medicos as Pat and myself were able to make an instant diagnosis. The population of Navajo-land was due to be increased by one — but God! what an *accouchement*!

She lay, naked except for a filthy shirt, on a pile of sheep-pelts and ragged blankets on the dirt floor. About her abdomen was looped a lariat, a double length of three-eighths-inch manila rope. The free end of the rope was about one of the vertical logs that supported the arched roof of the hogan. When the spasmodic pains seized her, two old women gripped her firmly by the

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shoulders, pinning her to the ground, while another woman and a man hauled lustily on the rope. The girl's naked body was dripping with sweat and blood trickled from her lips.

To one side was the local medicine-man, present in the dual capacity of consulting obstetrician and parish priest. He was nude from the waist up and his ancient torso, corded throat, and wrinkled face were smeared with alternate streaks of vermilion and black. On a blanket before him were the tools of his trade as spiritual adviser. There were cylindrical tubes of wood and stone through which the sacred pollen was blown, "dusters" of hawk and eagle feathers, small jars of pigments, colored sands, and what appeared to be pollen or corn-meal; the sun-dried mummy of a small lizard, and a host of other odds and ends that I did not take time to identify. Between his knees was a flat drum — it looked like Ute work, it certainly was not Navajo — and as the woman tossed and writhed he pounded and chanted. When she whimpered or screamed — and she screamed plenty — he raised his voice in a barbaric liturgy that ran the scale from a deep, guttural "Ho!" to a sharply-aspirated nasal whine.

There is something about the advent of new life into the world that is terrifying to a man. It constitutes a miracle of which he has no concept. Pat and I were

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paralyzed by the overwhelming realization of our own helplessness and incompetence. Even now my muscles are tense as the recollection of that moment surges over me—the filthiness, the sordidness, the agony, and our utter inaptitude for the task that confronted us. The medicine-man scowled angrily at our appearance on the scene but did not interrupt his chant. Pat was first to speak.

“This job’s up to you,” he whispered harshly. “I know something about broken bones, but here I’m lost. Your father was a doctor. Can’t you do something?”

I had never before heard advanced the theory that obstetrical skill might be inherited. I strove to recall all I had ever heard from my father or other physicians I had known. I asked myself if I had gleaned anything useful from my surreptitious reading of the fat volumes in my father’s medical library. I had thumbed my way, skipping frequently, through Garrigue’s *Obstetrics*; pored over some one’s else *Gynaecology*—and the woman screamed like a trapped animal and snapped me back to the present.

“Race over to our camp as fast as you can,” I ordered Pat. “Bring anything and everything that might possibly be of any use. Bring my toilet kit, there’s soap in it that I’ll need. And —” I shouted the last words after

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him — “bring that flat pan we use for mixing biscuits. It’s at least cleaner than the pans around here.”

He vanished through the low doorway and I knew he would be gone for the better part of an hour. I faced the task alone.

“Your woman?” I asked the Navajo who had summoned us.

“Oah.” (Yes)

“Talk English!” I could not take time laboriously to translate my wishes into my very, very halting Navajo. “I want hot water — boiling water — all you can get. I want some towels — you savvy towels? Get rags, flour sacks, anything. And chase some of these people out of here!”

I thrust out of the hogan the man and woman who were pulling on the rope and cast off the loop from about the girl’s body. The strands had cut deep furrows into her flesh. One of the old women who had been gripping the girl’s shoulders chattered angrily and toothlessly, but the husband shouted at her and she subsided. As I drew the expectant mother into a more comfortable position I heard the crackle of piñon sticks in the fire that smouldered outside and the gurgle of water being poured from a bucket.

The next three hours, should I record the events of each

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minute, would constitute an epic of an ignorance so colossal that it lost all semblance of ignorance and emerged as clear courage. What Pat and I did may have been proper under the circumstances; it may have been the worst possible course we could have taken. We proceeded on the assumption that Nature had been handling cases of this kind for some years, and that we had better give that expert old lady a chance. Our own efforts should be purely a secondary assistance.

We used what we'll call massage. We propped her up and we laid her down. We twisted her and we turned her, praying from time to time that the labor was a normal one. We used gentleness and, at times, brute force. Pat seconded me nobly — and all the time the medicine-man pounded and hummed and chanted and the two ancient midwives I had supplanted sat in the shadows behind him and glowered at the invading white man.

The baby — a boy — was born at eight o'clock by the grace of God, dumb luck, and the light of our gasoline lantern that Pat had brought over from camp. I smacked him and swung him and thrilled with Aesculapian pride when he emitted a piping squawk and I knew he was alive. Pat stood by, confessedly helpless, and I laid the infant down for a moment in order to attend to the young

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mother. The cessation of the medicine-man's chant and the angry resumption of the baby's squall drew my attention to the new Navajo.

The old priest had clutched the new arrival, had blown pollen all over him, rolled him in sacred corn-meal, and, with the help of one of the women, was busily engaged in swathing him in a yards-long bandage of filthy muslin!

We rescued him, washed him in warm water, and then — as the only antiseptic we possessed — used on mother and child an entire bottle of "Aqua Velva," a liquid after-shaving lotion that Pat had in his toilet kit. I can imagine loud screams of indignant protest from every maternity ward, but we had nothing else. I knew that the stuff was high in either alcohol or witch-hazel content and therefore antiseptic and probably would kill any bugs with which it came in contact. At any rate, either because of or in spite of our services, the infant lived and was noisily enjoying his first meal before we left.

It was after midnight when we rode through the moonlight to our own camp, turned loose our horses, and sought our blankets. I was on the verge of sleep when I heard Pat chuckling to himself — a chuckle that increased in volume to an infectious giggle.

"Well, what's the idea?" I demanded with the surli-

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ness permissible in a real friendship. "Laughing at the idea of me as a midwife?"

"No!" he gurgled. "You're the best midwife I ever assisted. What struck me as funny was the idea of what a hell of a perfect day of rest we've had!"

CHAPTER XIV

TO THE FOOT OF THE RAINBOW



CHAPTER XIV

To the Foot of the Rainbow

IF Kayenta is the farthest outpost of civilization in the Navajo country what can one call Teas-ya-toh, "Cottonwood Water," where Ben Wetherill is struggling against tremendous odds to make a home for his wife and babies, create a post for trading with the Navajos and Piutes who dwell about Navajo Mountain, as well as establish an outfitting point for parties going in to the Rainbow Bridge?

Here, indeed, is the last frontier. Beyond Teas-ya-toh "the trails run out and stop." Ben Wetherill — the Navajos still call him Aske-azhe, "Little Boy," although he has a couple of aske-azhes of his own — is 70 miles from his postoffice, 125 from a telephone or a doctor, and nearly 200 miles from such evidences of civilization as railroad

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trains, hotels, and drug-stores. He lives about three miles over the Utah line in a stone house almost hidden by the towering cottonwoods in a cañon on the eastern slope of Navajo Mountain. It's about 125 long, rough miles from Kayenta and nearly 200 — longer and rougher — from Flagstaff.

Long, rough miles, did I say? Friends, some of them are the longest and roughest that ever lay between you and a square meal! The junction with the main highway (!) is at Begashibito ("Cow Springs") where Luke Smyth has a trading-post. Luke is forty-odd miles from Kayenta and between his place and Ben's you pass just one human habitation — the trading-post known as Inscription House. Some of the road is fair, some is poor, and a goodly portion represents the utter depths of rottenness! Again and again you cross areas of naked red rock where your course is marked by splashes of white paint daubed on the stones. Follow the dotted line, that's the road!

But — and again that "but" — if you have in you a love of the true solitudes, if you can find a thrill in penetrating lands that have not changed since the cliff-dwellers built their homes in the red walls of the Tsagi, if the silent, calm, beautiful, savage, treacherous desert means more to you than all the wildernesses of steel and brick



“ WHERE THE ROCK RAINBOW SPANS THE CAÑON ”

To the Foot of the Rainbow

that men call cities — then you will revel in that ride to Teas-ya-toh!

Behind you the southern horizon is slashed across by the scalloped rim-rock of Black Mountain, swinging along in piñon-clad heights to where, in a jumble of tortured rocks, it breaks away into the narrow throat of Marsh Pass and meets the mouth of Tsagi Cañon. On your right, to the eastward, are miles of seemingly unbroken, gently rolling terrain covered with the dark green splotches of scattered piñon and juniper, with gray sage, and the deceptive bright green of the worthless salt-weed and turpentine bush. Unbroken? Take another look! That crimson rampart that thrusts itself up so unobtrusively is the eastern wall of Piute Cañon. A little further on lie the depths of the Tsagi, and beyond this are the gorges of Nakai Cañon, of Copper Cañon, of the Tsagiotso, and their countless forks and branches. A man ignorant of the trails could wander for days through that maze of sheer-walled ravines, seeking in vain for a crossing.

To the west, swimming in soft pinks and ochers and grays, are White Mesa and Preston Mesa, Square Butte, and the escarpment of Mormon Ridge. In the north lies a dim, blue, dome-shaped cloud that grows more distinct with each mile that is left behind. That cloud is Navajo Mountain — No'tsi-tsane, the "Head Mountain" of the

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Navajos — the abiding place of the War God, Na-gay Nesgaani, and beyond it lies our goal, the Rainbow Bridge.

The road dips and twines about the head of Neet-sin Cañon and we got a faint hint of the roughness of the region that lay beyond when, a few miles beyond Inscription House trading-post, we skirted the rim of Navajo Cañon. Neet-sin Cañon is a branch of Navajo Cañon and in a tiny side ravine at the junction of the two larger gorges lies the cliff-ruin that is known as Inscription House. As a prehistoric dwelling it amounts to very little. There are many larger, more beautiful, and archaeologically more interesting. But on one ruined wall is the half-obliterated legend:

“S . . hapiero ANO DOM 1661 ”

The early Spanish records of New Mexico and Arizona give us no hint of the identity of “S . . hapiero,” which seems to be a proper name and one of Portugese rather than Spanish origin. Who he was, whether a soldier or a cleric, and what he was doing in this arid wilderness, make up simply another of the mysteries with which the Southwest abounds. Perhaps he was seeking a new road from the Hopi Mesas to the great river that Cárdenas had christened the Colorado. Perhaps he was an explorer,



THE OUTFIT AT TEAS-YA-TUHL. STALLINGS, WADE, BIRNEY, ADAMS, HOFBOUT

To the Foot of the Rainbow

questing northward from the known country of the Little Colorado toward the lure of the distant blue mass of Navajo Mountain. One can speculate endlessly. All we know is that 248 years before an American stood in that dwelling S . . . hapiero passed through Navajo Cañon's riot of color, climbed to the ruined cliff-house, and with the point of his dagger scratched a record of his passing in the crumbling plaster.

After leaving the brink of Navajo Cañon the road doubles back and forth along the divide between that ravine and Piute Cañon to the eastward. One gets an endless succession of marvelous vistas across Piute Cañon and the Tsagi Mesas — and an equally endless succession of tooth-loosening jolts and soul-shattering jars as the car pitches over the rocks and hummocks and drifted bars of sand.

Navajo Mountain draws steadily nearer. It loses its resemblance to a hovering blue cloud and is revealed as a mountain (the crest is more than 10,000 feet above sea level), covered with dense timber and girt about with forbidding, deeply-crevassed, granite cliffs.

We pulled into Teas-ya-toh about the middle of the afternoon and after the formalities of shaking hands with Ben and Merle Wetherill were busy until dark. At least Vent and I were. Ed was all in and unpacked his bed-

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roll and faded out of the picture. Sid found an old Navajo who could — and would — talk a little English and presently was finding an ethnologist's delight in ascertaining the channels through which the native's squaw had obtained the marine shells that dangled from her broad, fringed, cotton belt.

Vent and I proceeded to raid the shelves of the trading-post, working on the assumption that it's far better to bring back some grub uneaten than not to have enough. Four men (five if we could get an Indian as horse-wrangler) . . . three days . . . better play safe and figure on eleven and possibly twelve meals. The problem is less simple than it sounds, being complicated by the fact that two mules are to pack this grub, food for themselves, and the bedrolls. It's complicated, but it's not particularly interesting. The interesting part comes later — when you're out on the trail and discover that you've left behind the sugar or, as once happened to me, when you lose the can-opener the first day out.

Vent (Ventress C.) Wade is a nephew of John Wetherill. He was born in Pueblo Bonito, lisped Navajo gutturals and aspirates before he spoke a word of English, and has been in to Rainbow Bridge — which he regards with a distinctly proprietary air — about a dozen times. To the Indians he is Aske-toh-lakohn — “The Boy from

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Sweetwater" — and he's one of the finest companions on a long hard trip that a man could have. They simply don't make 'em any better than Vent Wade.

Here's a good place to introduce the other members of the party, too. Sid you already know — a damn good kid and a lad that will some day make a name for himself in archaeology. He's a born skeptic, somewhat of a cynic, and he'll never go overboard on theory. His is the soul of a scientist. He demands facts and considers all theories worth little until they're backed up by genuine evidence. Women, says Sid, "gripe" him; and he'd far rather go off into the desert with me and eat frijoles and tough tortillas in a Papago hut than have the hottest date the University of Arizona can offer. I'm old enough to be his father, but he's one of the best chums I've ever had and some of these fine days when he's a Ph.D. and head of the Department of Archaeology at Yale, I'll be almighty proud to remind him that I took him on his first field trip — when we "discovered" the elephant petroglyphs in the Rincons.

Ed Adams was the tenderfoot of the party. When he straddled the mule and started for Rainbow Bridge it was the second time he'd ever ridden in his life. The first occasion was a few weeks earlier when he and Vent had been at Grand Cañon and Ed had ridden down Bright

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Angel Trail. He also is one of the better eggs. He got terribly stiff and saddle-sore, but no one ever heard a growl or complaint from his lips and the second the packs were off the mules he was turning in and doing a little more than his share in the preparation of the meal. (Lord, what a difference it makes on a trip if everybody does just a little more than his fair share!)

Those three were my companions — the statement sounds proprietary and as though I were running the expedition, but it wasn't meant that way. Good fellows all! Here's hoping that other summers will see us together again on the dim trails!

We had thought of calling our trip the Phi Delta Theta Expedition as three of us — Vent, Sid, and myself — were members of that fraternity. Another suggestion was that "Grass-widowers' Holiday" would be far more fitting as a title. Three of us had embarked on the matrimonial ocean and had seen the frail craft in which we fought the tides land on the rocks. Sid, nineteen, has that experience still before him.

We added a fifth member to the party before we went to bed that night, a Piute Indian known as "Dick." To us he was, variously, "Dick," "the native," or "Hotshot"; and he answered with equal readiness and constant good humor to all three. He dressed like a Navajo, wearing

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his hair tied in the typical Navajo knot at the back of his head, and he talked Navajo — which was good for Dick as none of us knew a word of the Shoshonean dialect of the Piutes. In the days of his youth Dick had experimented with dynamite or some other explosive and had emerged from his research minus his right hand — or a goodly part of it. He seemed very sensitive about his mutilation, keeping his sleeve pulled down over the stump or carrying it thrust into the bosom of his shirt. We paid him \$2.50 a day, and his grub, of course, to act as horse-wrangler. His duty it was to gather the mules in the morning and while on the trail to ride in the rear of the procession and see to it that the pack-animals did not dally by the roadside. A good man, was old Hotshot.

We slept beneath the great cottonwoods that grow about the War God Spring and the next morning were, as Mr. Pepys might have said, up betimes. Supplies were given a final anxious checking over and there was a hectic and profane half hour of saddling and packing. We used the regular "saw-buck" pack-saddle, alforjas for the grub and such stuff, the bedrolls on top, and fastened everything snugly with the single-diamond hitch.

The start is always a period of confusion. The mules have been running free and are spooky and rebellious. Packs are heavy and not yet properly apportioned. The

Roads to Roam

men don't know the mules and the mules don't know the men, and the net result is a nervous uncertainty and considerable language. By the second day all the little wrinkles are ironed out and the train — if I am warranted in calling two pack-animals a train — is functioning normally.

One thing I know: a mute could never handle a pack-mule. There is something about a mule — the innate mulishness of the brute, as it were — that absolutely demands language. Horses are horses, but mules are distinctly individualists. I am convinced that they have a sense of humor and equally certain that their wit is motivated entirely by Poe's Imp of the Perverse. They will deliberately take a deep breath and hold it while they're being cinched — plenty of horses know that trick, too — and exhale that breath with diabolic pleasure in finding their girths comfortably slack. They will wait until one is standing tip-toe to reach a lashing and then lazily side-step just sufficient distance to throw the packer off his balance. They will delight in sneaking into camp and eating a Dutch-oven-full of biscuits, in lying down fully packed and having to be unpacked before they can rise, in scraping your bedroll against every tree and rocky wall they encounter, and in perpetually maintaining an air of bland, long-eared innocence that makes the well-



FOLLOW THE LEADER ACROSS THE SLICK ROCKS



IN BRIDGE CAÑON

To the Foot of the Rainbow

known expression of the cat that has just eaten the canary look like the furtive guilt of Judas Iscariot!

There's only one thing they really understand — language. The more sulphurous it is the better a mule likes it and the better he works. If you can't curse, learn before starting out with a mule-train; if you have scruples against profanity hire somebody who hasn't and plug your ears. Vent and I did the packing on our trip, and we were not once compelled to stop along the trail and adjust a pack. We are either expert packers or expert cussers or both — write your own ticket.

We got under way about nine and stopped for lunch on Beaver Creek. Thus far the trail is very easy — a pleasant ride through piñon and over sunny flats with frequent gorgeous views across Piute Cañon toward the distant San Juan and the sharp peaks of the Henry Mountains. Navajo Mountain — somber, even menacing under its dark mantle of timber and its stern gray cliffs — was ever on our left hand. This lonely peak is sacred ground to the Indians. The War God lives there and they avoid its steep slopes — a superstitious taboo that accounts for the magnificent virgin timber that is up there. Did the War God dwell anywhere else, that spruce and pine would have been cut years ago and converted into the stout framework of countless hogans!

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From Beaver Creek on, the trail proceeds to show what it can do toward making the Rainbow Bridge the most difficult of access of any of the National Monuments of America. It dips and twists across rough ridges, ever opening up new vistas of hills of sandstone so smooth that there's not a crack where earth can collect and afford roothold for the hardy desert plants. The path crosses the foot of some of these hummocks, slides unobtrusively between others, and then, with no warning whatever, launches itself across the dreaded and justly famous "Slick Rocks."

The trail as a whole is famous as one of the worst in America, and of all portions of it the "Slick Rocks" is the most notorious. Zane Grey, Winifred Dixon, and Charles L. Bernheimer have all written about them with varying degrees of respect and terror. The photographs show their nature far more clearly than any verbal description. They are exactly what their name implies, veritable mountains of solid rock as slick and smooth as any rock surface can be. Pass them you must if you would go to Tsa-nodzelid and for some six or seven hundred exciting yards the trail leads directly across their treacherous, slippery surface.

The Slick Rocks are dangerous, not for a second am I claiming them to be anything else, but I'm going to differ

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with Grey, Dixon, and Bernheimer by stating that in my opinion there are other far more dangerous points on the trail in to Rainbow Bridge. Paradoxical though it sounds, the Slick Rocks are so dangerous that they're safe. Riders — even the Indians! — dismount and walk, horses and mules are obviously vigilant, and there are very few spots where an animal, even if he should slip, would do more than kill himself and give you one monkey and parrot of a time recovering the load he was carrying. He would not be likely to crash into other animals, hurling them to the same fate, or to crush the man who was leading him. The Slick Rocks are thrilling, and splendidly spectacular, but in my opinion they do not approach, for genuine danger, such spots as the climb out of Surprise Valley, the descent into Bridge Cañon, or even one or two places in Redbud Pass. At either of the first two points mentioned one falling animal would mean sheer tragedy. The trail is so steep that there'd be little chance of his catching himself, and the throat through which it passes is so narrow that the men and animals below could not possibly avoid the falling beast.

But as I remarked in Havasu Cañon and may observe again before this trip is finished — Western horses and mules don't fall! Those tough little hard-tails of Ben Wetherill's will —

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“climb up the side of a sign-board
And trust to the stick of the paint.”

We were duly thrilled by the Slick Rocks, but like every other party that has ever gone in to the Bridge we negotiated their crossing in perfect safety, remounted, and rode on towards Surprise Valley between the sheer cliffs that hem in Junction Creek. As we jogged along, finding a comfortable relaxation in covering ground where unceasing vigilance was not required, we heard a sharp exclamation from Hotshot who was keeping the pack-animals close up to the rest of the parade. He told us that another pack-train was overtaking us — four Americans and a Navajo.

This was indeed an event! The trail to the foot of the Rainbow is one American highway where one need never worry about traffic congestion. Vent Wade has made the trip about a dozen times and this was the first occasion that he had encountered another party. They were well mounted on big mules that weighed a couple of hundred pounds more than our hardy little beasts (these big fellows cover more ground but they also require a heap more feeding) and they overhauled us rapidly, passing us near the head of Junction Creek where the great pink cliffs are sliced and slashed vertically as a grocer slices

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cheese. There were two men, the leader obviously a professional guide, a boy of seventeen or eighteen, and a slender little woman in the shabbiest of shabby blue denim Levis, scuffed cowboy boots, and spurs that were evidently the veterans of many miles of trails. Their speed carried them past us rapidly, but we learned that they had been up on Fifty-mile Mountain (the local name for the area shown on the maps as the Kaiparowits Plateau), had crossed the Colorado at the famous Hole-in-the-Rock, and were on their way in to the Bridge.

"So-long, we'll see you there!" we shouted, and

"We'll see you there!" was the cheery response.

We camped in Surprise Valley, made famous by Zane Grey in his "Riders of the Purple Sage" and its sequel "The Rainbow Trail." It turned out to be quite a surprise. Brother Grey renovated it considerably when he gave it a place in fiction. *Lassiter* would have a hard time blocking this eastern approach by rolling any rocks, and the valley was cluttered in most untidy fashion with blocks of sandstone about the size of a three-story house that had been chucked promiscuously about.

There are no cliff dwellings there. The big communal house that Grey put in Surprise as a place where his hero and heroine could find refuge is actually Betata'kin — the Side Hill House — in Tsagi Cañon. Grey's action

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in moving it a few score miles was, however, perfectly legitimate. All of us writing guys do tricks like that.

Over Surprise Valley, Navajo Mountain, a brooding giant in a dark green mantle, bulks in huge guardianship to the southward, sheer cliffs shut in the vale to east and west, while to the north, between the cliffs, one gazes over the Gargantuan boulders down the valley of Nasja Creek to the red rocks of the Colorado and the looming mass of Wildhorse Mesa.

We off-saddled and unpacked. Every muscle in poor Ed's body was throbbing with its separate ache but he was as game as they make 'em and buckled right down to helping me with the supper while Vent rode out to drag in some wood. Vent's mule, Bino, was temperamental. At some time in his career he had been frightened at a pile of brush — probably by a rattlesnake — and he simply would not approach any mass of brush or dead timber. Presently a red-faced Ventress returned, minus wood.

“Gimme those spurs, Birney!”

I had the only pair of spurs in the outfit and Vent buckled them on and proceeded to show Bino who was who and what was what. The language was masterly. Vent departed, raking Bino at every jump and doing his best to wear out a lash-rope on him, and flung back as—

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surance that he'd bring back either "plenty wood or a dead mule."

While he was gone we scouted round and rustled enough wood for a good fire and when Vent got back supper was ready. Bino was alive and they brought no wood. The mule's brush-pile inhibitory complex was too much for Vent!

The party which had passed us had also camped in Surprise and after supper I strolled over to visit our neighbors. Introduced myself and they responded, telling me that they were a Mr. and Mrs. Burnham. The youth was their nephew and the guide was one of Richardson's men from Rainbow Lodge.

"You're not from Philadelphia, by any chance, are you?" I asked, the name Burnham recalling many memories of my birthplace and of Mr. and Mrs. William Burnham, dear friends of my parents.

And to my infinite surprise I learned that they *were* from Philadelphia, that Mr. B. was a nephew of William Burnham! We discovered that we had a host of mutual friends and acquaintances; one name suggested another, and there in Surprise Valley, as remote and as little visited a spot as one can find in America, we chattered to one another with such dear, familiar names as Haverford, Villa Nova, Plymouth Meeting, Chestnut Street, Chester

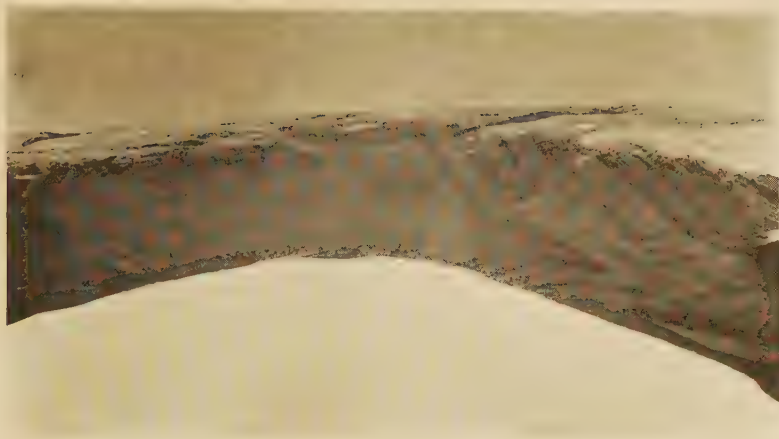
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Valley, Wanamaker's, and the *Public Ledger*. Could one ask for a finer example of the horribly bromidic truth of the smallness of the world?

They were members of the Society of Friends and it was very sweet to hear once more the gentle "thee" and "thou" of the Friends' speech; the usage that invests the most casual remark with a personal note that is almost a caress. "Do you remember?" is nothing more than a query, a challenge to the recollection of the person addressed, but "Does thee remember?" carries with it a delightful suggestion of experiences mutually enjoyed and a haunting thought of secrets shared. I love to hear that Quaker speech.

We yarned for a couple of hours. They'd been out for several weeks, crossing the Colorado first at Lee's Ferry and striking northeast to the remote little Mormon village of Escalante and then south to the Hole-in-the-Rock. They told me of that region, of the legend of the "golden Jesus as big as a man" that is buried in a cave on Fifty-mile Mountain; and I strove to repay them with stories of Montana and of the life and death of that winsome, lovable character Boone Helm and the scarcely less charming Henry Plummer.

The others were in bed when I returned to our camp through moonlight that made the valley as bright as



THE ARCH FROM DIRECTLY BENEATH



THE SOARING NORTH ABUTMENT

To the Foot of the Rainbow

day, with the shadows of the great rocks as sharply defined as though they had been cut out of jet and thrown down on the ground. Vent roused sufficiently to light a cigarette and chat while I undressed and we chuckled together at the long harangue in Piute that old Hotshot, sleeping soundly a few yards away, was delivering between bubbling snores.

Rain pattering on my blankets roused me just before sun-up. The valley was gray and chill in the early light. Heavy clouds hung over Navajo Mountain. I pulled up my tarp, lit a cigarette, and cussed. A rainy day is a day of discomfort with a pack-train. Everything is wet, soggy, and slippery. Ropes are as stiff and as difficult to handle as so much barbed wire, and stretch appallingly within five minutes after you think you've got everything lashed snugly and securely aboard the irritable mules. Hence and therefore I cussed.

Presently I was aware that Vent was pulling up his tarp. Then Sid grunted and turned over, and in a few moments the smoke of four most unhealthy before-breakfast cigarettes was trickling from beneath as many tarpaulins and my speculations as to how long this was going to last were profanely quadrupled.

The Red Gods were good to us. The shower continued for only five or ten minutes and had ceased by the time

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our cigarettes were ready to be crushed in the sand. Hot-shot brought up the remuda while we were cooking breakfast and the mules stood around, munching the corn in their nosebags, while we consumed bacon, Dutch-oven biscuits, peach jam, and vast quantities of coffee that was strong enough to do housework.

The trail out of Surprise is very steep, very rough, and follows what is little more than a gash between vertical cliffs. In my humble opinion, expressed once before, this spot and the equally breath-taking descent into Bridge Cañon, a few miles further on, are far more dangerous than the much press-agented and greatly dreaded Slick Rocks. Here, on this western side of Surprise Valley, *Lassiter* would not have to seek far for a place where a single one of the many mammoth boulders would, if rolled into the trail, shut him and *Jane Withersteen* in forever.

Beyond Surprise the trail angles across a high mesa and then plunges once more into the labyrinth of cañons. Lord, how rough it is, and how inadequate are words to convey to you a sense of that roughness! In Yosemite Valley, for instance, description is a more or less simple matter. The valley is small; the eye can really grasp the entire panorama at once. But here, in the triangle between the Colorado, the San Juan, and Navajo Moun-

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tain, every crook and turn of the cañons is guarded by an El Capitan! The entire region resembles nothing so much as an ocean, tossed by a hurricane, and suddenly turned to stone — save for the fact that these rocky billows are a hundred times higher than any the ocean ever produced and no ice cliffs were ever mightier or more sheer than the tremendous brooding walls of these tortuous gorges.

It is impossible to convey an adequate impression of its vastness, the beauty of the myriad forms assumed by the tremendous erosions, and its utter, almost depressing, isolation. Even Hotshot (he had never been in beyond Junction Creek before) was impressed. Again and again he exclaimed “Nezhün! Nezhün!” (“Beautiful! Beautiful!”) and once he halted Sid, who called me back to find out what the old fellow was talking about, to point out, in the weirdly sculptured rocks, the profile of a “dogi-stlaani” — a man with a beard. To save my soul I couldn’t see it, but I assured Hotshot I did and that it was both “Yah-tay!” and “Nezhün!”

Only a country such as this, where nature has run riot, could produce a Rainbow Bridge; but strangely enough one finds the first sight of the marvel vaguely disappointing. The arch itself is dwarfed in the immensity of its setting. Though it measures 275 feet across the span and

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310 from the "keystone" to the bed of the cañon, it appears small against the background of thousand-foot cliffs.

But walk down the cañon, skirting the pools of crystal-clear water that fill the deep "pot-holes" in the rocks, and stand directly beneath that mighty arch. Far overhead is a slender thread of rock — a bar of red across the blue sky. On either side it swings downward in a perfect, symmetrical curve to the cañon floor. No force of stone-masons could carve a more perfect arch. Slowly that pink bar recedes. One glances from it to one's companions, to himself; one realizes how infinitely small is a human being — and Tsa-na-na-ah begins to assume its true proportions.

The mind is almost satiated with wonders before the bridge is reached. It does not burst on one suddenly in all its glory as does the Grand Cañon. It is attained by a slow, patient progress through the wilderness that surrounds it — and only very gradually does one gain a realization of its wonder. It is as though one were permitted to paw through a collections of gems thrown at random on a table. For a time the eye would be dazzled and critical appreciation prevented by the brilliance of diamonds, the gleam of emeralds, the crimson flash of rubies, the luster of jade, and the prismatic glint of opal, ame-



EAST THROUGH THE ARCH TOWARDS NAVAJO MOUNTAIN

To the Foot of the Rainbow

thyst, peridot, and topaz. Only after some minutes would one begin to pick out individual beauties, deciding at last upon some lustrous, rosy pearl or a priceless star sapphire.

Such is Rainbow Bridge — a perfect gem in a perfect setting: the most remote, the loneliest, and the most beautiful single natural wonder of America.

We camped below the Bridge — its shadow fell across us — and Vent and I threw all our culinary skill into the preparation of a banquet that would do justice to the place and the occasion. The principal course was corned beef hash — don't laugh, that's noble chow if it's cooked right — with chopped green peppers and pimientos. In addition, we had fried potatoes, lima beans, asparagus salad, biscuits, jam, and sliced peaches. We stuffed, sighed, and returned to stuff some more. There were no leftovers. The native attended to the scraping of every pot and pan. One never has to worry about garbage disposal when traveling with an Indian. The only things he doesn't eat are the cans.

And speaking of cans, it's wonderful the selection of food that one can now obtain in that form. Roast beef, chicken *à la king*, pot roast, eggs, and every vegetable that was ever grown. Maybe all the necessary vitamins are stewed out of such canned grub, but it's sure an im-

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provement on the eternal sowbelly and beans to which one was limited not so long ago.

When the last plate was licked Vent and I lit our cigarettes and informed Ed and Sid that they had been elected to wash the dishes. I selected a spot for my bedroll and stretched out, gazing up at the great span. It grew larger each moment as the sky darkened — a black arch against purple velvet. Then I turned my eyes down the cañon, westward toward the Colorado. All about us the cliffs were jet black against the sky, but there to the west the rock walls were a ghostly silver. The moon was rising and the four of us walked up the cañon to the eastern side of the bridge.

The full moon swept into the sky from behind Navajo Mountain. The Bridge was still in darkness although the crests of the lofty walls above it were touched with silver. The light moved downward slowly, down the face of the cliffs and along the cañon. It was as though some master of stage effects was deliberately postponing and delaying the final revelation of his big scene. Then finally the curving crest of the arch was touched by the light, splashed suddenly with silver paint, dripping from the moon. The luminance swept across the arch and down the graceful columns of the buttresses, fluted by vertical cleavages, with a swiftness that was breath-taking in its swift revelation of beauty.

To the Foot of the Rainbow

Tsa-nodzelid under the witchery of the full moon! Nothing could be more marvelous, nothing more beautiful; nor could anything more perfectly attest the definite existence of a Supreme Being, a mighty Architect of the universe, and the wonders of which He is capable.

In my breast were the same emotions with which I had watched the sun set over Monument Valley. God has been very good to me. He has allowed me to see the Grand Cañon, Havasu, Yosemite, the Rockies, the desert in its infinite variety, Monument Valley, and the Rainbow Bridge. He doesn't owe me a thing, and even if I never find that "complement of understanding and sympathy" of which some of you have spoken I'm still way ahead of the game.

The shadow of the Bridge was flung on the cliffs beyond, a lesser rainbow of black velvet. Overhead, precisely spanning the span and following its curvature exactly, were the three stars in the "tail" of Ursa Major!

God in His Glory! There's no use even trying to describe it!

We sat there until long after the bridge was completely revealed and then returned to our camp. I did not sleep for a long, long time — being content to lie there and look upwards, up at that marvelous arch and the full moon riding the heavens behind it.

CHAPTER XV

THE HOMEWARD TRAIL



CHAPTER XV

The Homeward Trail

THERE'S little more to this tale of my summer's wanderings. After Rainbow Bridge any additional details would be anti-climactic. A visit to that lonely marvel — particularly under the conditions that we were so fortunate as to encounter — marks a distinct forward stride in one's spiritual development. Go there; and if you do not come away a little better for the experience, a little more closely in tune with the Infinite, I'll pay for your trip!

And if, after you've been there, the conversation should turn to the National Monuments of America, if people speak of Grand Cañon, the Yellowstone, and Idaho's "Craters of the Moon," just ask: "Have you been in to Rainbow Bridge by way of Surprise Valley?" Of the trips to the country's playgrounds it stands supreme;

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the Medal of Honor, the Phi Beta Kappa key, and the Catalina Island "diamond button" of adventuring beyond the beaten track.

Although we had some five or six hundred miles yet to travel the four of us regarded the Bridge as the end of our summer. Vent and Ed had to get back for business, for Sid there was the opening of college, and I was eager to see once more the little home in the desert.

Packs were lighter now. Five healthy male appetites had about wrecked the greater portion of the grub under which the mules had grunted at the start of the trip. We fed the last of the grain to the animals, packed, and were off to an early start, determined to push straight on through to Teas-ya-toh by way of Redbud Pass, Lookout Ridge, and Endische Spring. At the turn of the cañon we paused for a last farewell to Tsa-nodzelid. Nineteen years earlier Byron Cummings and John Wetherill, guided by the Piute Nasja-bega, had found their way in to Rainbow Bridge. During those nineteen years not more than six or seven hundred people—a thousand if you want to count "repeats"—have followed in the footsteps of the wiry old archaeologist and "Hosteen John." It was at this point where we halted that Cummings had earned the distinction of being the first white



THE LITTLE HOME IN THE CACTUS, AND —



— THE VIEW FROM THE FRONT DOOR

The Homeward Trail

man to see the great sandstone arch. John Wetherill had been first to walk beneath the span. What thoughts were theirs, I wondered, as Nasja-bega led them across the Slick Rocks and through the perilous defile into Bridge Cañon?

"Where did you think you were going?" I once asked Malcolm Cummings, who had also been a member of that famous first party.

"We didn't know," he admitted frankly. "There wasn't one of us but wondered whether or not we'd ever come back, but there was only one man who whined and continually proposed abandoning the expedition."

There's no use in giving publicity of that nature to any man. The name of the slacker, with the details of his lack of courage, is in the registry book that is kept beneath the bridge. You may read the entire account there in the precise, scientific phraseology of Byron Cummings, who appears to have been utterly unconscious of the drama of human endeavor he was describing, and the more spirited postscript that was added by Neil Judd.

Nasja-bega is dead. He died during the great influenza epidemic of 1918, but the older Indians believe that his death was a delayed punishment inflicted by the gods of

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the rocky gorges for his defiance of tradition in taking the white man in to the sacred rock arch. A bronze tablet to the memory of Nasja-bega has been placed in the north wall of the cañon just above the ridge.

The out-trail from Tsa-nodzelid, if one continues on to the westward and completes the circuit of Navajo Mountain, is almost as spectacular as that coming in over the Slick Rocks and through Surprise Valley. That this trail exists is due to one man — Charles L. Bernheimer. This wealthy New York Jew has as a hobby the exploration of this little-known corner of America. He was convinced that Navajo Mountain could be circumnavigated and spent three seasons in proving his contention. Two rebuffs did not daunt him. He returned a third summer and in 1924, with T.N.T. and incredible labor, John Wetherill and Zeke Johnson and their men, employed by Bernheimer, blasted a trail through the divide between Cliff Cañon and Redbud Cañon, naming the narrow cleft Redbud Pass. Those who *know* refer to this westward approach to Rainbow Bridge as the Bernheimer Trail. The Richardsons, who have established an outfitting post at Endische Spring, have done considerable work on the pathway and are endeavoring to make it famous as their own work, calling it "The Rainbow Lodge Trail." Bernheimer might well say that it was they who —

The Homeward Trail

“traced me by the camps I’d quitted, used the waterholes
I’d hollowed;
They’ll go back and do the talking; they’ll be called the
Pioneers!”

The pass is a succession of narrow, dark defiles between tremendous cliffs. At several spots a rider can extend his arms and touch the walls on either hand and you travel with one eye on the trail ahead and the other watching, with an even greater anxiety, the progress of the pack-animals. There’s a distinct limit to the amount of scraping against rough sandstone that a bedroll will stand!

Safely through the pass, we stopped for a final drink in Cliff Cañon.

“Fill up, men,” Vent warned us. “We turn out of the cañon just above here. No more water till we get to Rainbow Lodge.”

I don’t know if any name has been given to the hill that one climbs from Cliff Cañon, past No Name Mesa, to the crest of the great spur that thrusts out as the western point of Navajo Mountain. Vent Wade and Ben Wetherill refer to it simply as “the long hill” — thereby displaying a woeful lack of dramatic appreciation. That breath-taking ascent ought to have a name — one as de-

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scriptive as the title of "Giant's Despair" given to the famous hill at Wilkes Barre.

You climb 2,500 feet, and it's just about as close to straight up as even a mountain-bred mule can go. You have to stop every few yards and give the hard-working animals an opportunity to breathe, and I doubt if the mules find any reward or satisfaction in the marvelous view that is revealed from the summit.

We stopped for lunch about half-way up the grade. The Burnham party, in advance of us, had dropped a can of stewed pears and our salvage of the fruit determined the halting place. There were five of us and we consumed one quart of beans, one of tomatoes, one of peaches, one of pears, and one of apricots. Verily, fruit is mighty and shall prevail — particularly when you're crossing a waterless land.

Ed Adams and I traded mules here and I rode white Jimmy the balance of the way to Teas-ya-toh. We each of us were convinced we got the best of the bargain, most unusual and truly satisfactory in a horse trade. Paused only long enough to get a drink at Rainbow Lodge and then, jogging at a steady six miles an hour across the level terrain south of the mountain, pounded on to the post.

The trip to civilization was devoid of special interest.



THE RED ROCKS OF SEDONA CREEK

The Homeward Trail

We stopped to visit for an hour with Luke Smyth at Begashibito and then drove on between the "Elephant Legs" to Red Lake and over the ungodly rough lower road between that post and Tuba. Drove down to old Moencopie pueblo, a Hopi village that isn't nearly so old as the Santa Fe advertising would have you think, paused to show Sid and Ed the dinosaur tracks a few miles south of the Moencopie Wash, and then raced onwards along the rim of the Painted Desert with the bare peaks of the San Francisco Mountains looming ever higher before us.

By dusk we were in Flagstaff, rejoicing in the sybaritic luxuries of hot baths and shaves. At seven o'clock Sid was complaining to a waitress because she had failed to bring him a napkin. At noon that same day he had been sitting under a piñon tree on the rim of Navajo Cañon eating cold beans with his fingers. Thus abrupt is the transition from paleolithic man to the culture of percolated coffee and Spanish omelettes.

We did not leave Flag until after lunch the following day, September third, heading for Prescott by way of Snebley Hill and the Sedona Valley. None of us had ever been over the road before. I knew that it existed as an alternate route to Prescott by way of Clarkdale and Jerome, but had not even a suspicion of its scenic beauty. In

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approaching it from the north, the valley of Sedona Creek bursts on your sight with the startling suddenness of the Grand Cañon. The pines cease abruptly, falling away in a steep descent down which the road loops and twists in a series of curves and pitches that would give an Eastern highway engineer delirium tremens. Beyond that hill is a sea of misty blue through which rears a succession of vast dikes and ridges more brilliant in their coloring than any other formations I have ever seen. Their hue is almost a vermillion and high up their craggy sides a brave little forest of cedar dots the scarlet walls with patches of restful green. It is a most beautiful spot, scarcely an hour's drive from Flagstaff over good roads, and yet — so far as my observation goes — neglected entirely in the advertising of that town. The Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce speaks of the Rainbow Bridge as though it lay only a few miles beyond the city limits, and of Grand Cañon as though a brick tossed from the roof of the Monte Vista Hotel would fall in the Colorado River, but they seem to ignore entirely the wonderful country about the foot of Snebley Hill.

In first gear, and using brakes now and then on the curves and the more abrupt descents, we rolled easily down the long grade, each curve serving to open up to

The Homeward Trail

us new views of the rocky escarpments, and then, looping along at fifty and sixty over a splendid road, highballed across the valley to the twin mining towns of Clarkdale and Jerome. They are twins, but Jerome, a thousand feet up the Mountain from Clarkdale, looks down on her sister with the supercilious snobbery of an Anglican cathedral regarding a dissenting chapel.

The highway from Clarkdale (altitude 4,000 feet) to Jerome and on over Mingos Mountain (7,025 feet at the summit) is as magnificent a stretch of mountain road as can be found anywhere in America — and there are more thrills to it than you'll find on a dozen scenic railways. We tore on down the western slope and then — the Chrysler in the lead and the Chevvy staying pretty close on her tail — held both cars wide open across Skull Valley (some day I'll have to find out how it acquired that gruesome name) into Prescott.

The end of the summer's trail was in sight. Sid and I got away to an early start the following morning and, alternating at the wheel, slid through the Black Mountains, across Antelope Valley, down the tortuous Yarnell Hill, and on through Congress Junction and Wickenburg to Phoenix. We stopped in the state capital only for gasoline, got lunch in Mesa, and headed south through

Roads to Roam

Chandler and Sacatone to Casa Grande. Except for a short stretch across a corner of the Pima Reservation it was a splendid road, graded dirt, as level as a floor, that took us on under the shadow of Picacho Peak and across the desert.

We were close to home and I was driving with a heavy foot. At a steady mile a minute gait from the railroad crossing at Red Rock it was not long before the scattered white houses of Tucson were in sight. We got an early dinner and I dropped Sid at the fraternity house, then turned Betsy eastward over a road that she knew as well as I. Five miles straight out Speedway, a turn to the left, and then four miles to the Wrightstown school — a landmark for all who find their way to my homestead. A sharp right turn beyond the schoolhouse, a half mile of desert road winding through the greasewood and silver cholla, across the cattle guard that is inserted at the break in my ocatilla fence, and the familiar and beloved little brick and stone house was before me. Everything was as I had left it nearly three months before. The kindly little gray ghosts of the desert had kept careful watch and ward during my absence.

Descanso — restfulness, tranquillity, and peace. I was HOME!

And now, without further apology or explanation,



HOME AGAIN. "WE" — BETSY AND ME — AT DESCANSO

The Homeward Trail

this Odyssey of my summer of 1928 is passed on to you dear people whom I think it would interest. Mine has been the far from simple task of endeavoring to transmute experiences, sensations, and impressions into speech with the hope that that speech will, in turn, transmute itself back once more into experience, sensation, and impression for you who read.

Would that you — and you — and you —, friends of mine, could have been with me. This beautiful, primitive Southwest is vastly different from the country to which you are accustomed. It is far from your homes, far from Rough Hill, from the dark waters of Taunton, and from the clamor of the traffic of Philadelphia. It is a land you must see and know if you would understand it. But if these scribblings of mine succeed in making you want to see it and to follow the dim trails and seek the foot of the Rainbow with me, I am content and repaid

¡Hasta la vista, amigos!



